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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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9 killed at stampede in Andhra temple

A railing collapse triggered the crush at the four-month-old 'Chinna Tirupati' temple

KASIBUGGA, 1 NOV

At least nine people, eight women and a 12-year-old boy, were killed and several others injured in an incident at the Venkateswara Swamy Temple in Srikakulam district on Saturday. Earlier in the day, District Collector Swapnil Dinkar Pundkar had placed the toll at 10.

The temple, which opened to devotees just four months back, is modelled on the grand Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Tirumala and is called "Chinna Tirupati".

State Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha said the temple, a privately run shrine not under the Endowments Department, typically draws 1,500–2,000 devotees on Saturdays. The crowd was significantly larger this weekend as Ekadasi coincided with Karthika Masam, a period known for heightened pilgrimage. Seven of the deceased were aged between 35 and 40.

According to the minister, the temple stands on an elevated first-floor platform. As devotees climbed the steps, a railing gave way, causing worshippers gathered at a corner to fall onto one another. Srikakulam Superintendent of Police (SP) KV Maheshwara Reddy said the collapse triggered panic but stressed that this was not a stampede. "People fell from a height of around six feet. One person fell on another, and that led to the incident," he said.

Reddy underscored that all temples and religious institutions must obtain police permission for events of any scale under the Public Safety Act. Had the organisers alerted police, security could have been arranged, he added. He further stated that the temple's owner, Mukunda Panda, had neither secured the required permissions nor informed authorities of the gathering. The temple was reportedly constructed recently without official clearance.

Police have initiated cases under culpable homicide provisions, with Reddy calling the incident "purely an accident arising from the owner's negligence". Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia payment of Rs 2 lakh each. —PTI

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The temple is located at an elevation on the first floor and when the devotees were climbing, the railing broke, resulting in the people standing at a corner falling on one another **PHOTO: PTI**

INDIA SEES 9 STAMPEDES IN 2025

HERE ARE THE TRAGEDIES THAT TOOK PLACE THIS YEAR:

6 DEAD: Tirupati, Andhra (8 Jan)
A crowd of around 2,500 devotees surged forward at the Venkateswara Temple while collecting free ticket passes, triggering a deadly crush moments after the gates were opened.

30 DEAD: Prayag Maha Kumbh Mela, UP (29 Jan)
Chaos erupted at the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj when thousands rushed to bathe, breaching barricades. The tragedy intensified amid allegations that poor management forced people to sleep near the ghats, causing multiple falls and a fatal chain reaction.

7 DEAD: Shree Lairai Devi Temple, Goa (3 May)
During the Lairai Jatra festival, a crowd of 30,000–40,000 massed on a slope. When a few devotees slipped, the densely packed gathering toppled over, leading to a deadly pile-up.

11 DEAD: RCB victory celebration, Bengaluru (4 June)
A stampede broke out at M Chinnaswamy Stadium during RCB's IPL victory celebration. Overcrowding and crowd-control lapses were cited as key causes.

3 DEAD: Puri Ratha Yatra, Odisha (29 June)
A sudden rush to glimpse the idols atop the chariots triggered a crush during the Rath Yatra in Puri.

6 DEAD: Mansa Devi Temple, Uttarakhand (27 July)
A falling electric cable sparked panic on a narrow path, forcing devotees to run toward a dead-end wall, worsening the crush.

2 DEAD: Avsaneshwar Temple, UP (28 July)
A live electric cord crash-landing onto a tin shed caused panic inside the Barabanki temple, leading to a brief but fatal stampede.

41 DEAD: Vijay's Karur Rally, TN (27 Sept)
Over 30,000 people packed a venue meant for 10,000 at a TVK rally, resulting in a catastrophic crowd crush. Investigators blamed severe crowd mismanagement and inadequate safety planning.

ISRO's to launch heaviest satellite today

SRIHARIKOTA, 1 NOV

The countdown for the launch of India's heaviest communication satellite, CMS-03, commenced on Saturday at 7:10 PM, with liftoff scheduled for November 2 at 5:26 PM. Weighing approximately 4,410 kg, CMS-03 will be launched into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit aboard the LVM3-M5 rocket, known as 'Bahubali'. ISRO confirmed, "All systems are GO as we move closer to liftoff," highlighting the rocket's capabilities to lift payloads of up to 4,000 kg. The mission aims to enhance communication services over the Indian subcontinent and surrounding oceanic regions. Following the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission, this launch marks another significant achievement for India's space agency. —PTI

>>>More on Page 4

EC orders transfer of Patna SP after violence in Mokama

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

EC on Saturday ordered the transfer of Patna Superintendent of Police (Rural) following violence in Bihar's Mokama after the murder of a Jan Suraaj Party supporter. Tension has gripped Mokama ahead of assembly polls in the state, after Jan Suraaj Party supporter Dularchand Yadav was killed during an election campaign. On Friday, Yadav's supporters pelted stones at the car Rashtriya Janata Dal's Mokama candidate Veena Devi. "The Commission has further directed that Vikram Sihag, Superintendent of Police (Rural), Patna may also be transferred. Hence, a panel of officers for posting a substitute in his place may be sent urgently," the poll authority told the state chief electoral officer. The Election Commission on Friday sought a detailed report from the state at the earliest. —PTI

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Centre neglecting Kannada, imposing Hindi: CM

BENGALURU, 1 NOV

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah accused the Union government of "neglecting" Kannada language and imposing Hindi, calling on people of the State to oppose those who are "anti-Kannada".

"Federal government is meting out step motherly treatment to Karnataka," Siddaramaiah said during his address on the occasion of 70th Kannada Rajyotsava (State foundation day) in the City on Saturday.

"Injustice is being done to the classical language Kannada by denying adequate funds for its growth. We have to oppose all those who are anti-Kannada," the CM said. "There are continuous attempts to impose Hindi. Grants are given for the development of Hindi and Sanskrit while other languages of the country are being neglected."

> English and Hindi are weakening the talent of our children
> —Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa, CM Siddaramaiah, DyCM DK Shivakumar take the guard of honour during a students' march-past at the 70th Karnataka Rajyotsava celebrations at Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on Saturday **PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Underlining the need to take Kannada language and its culture to new heights, Siddaramaiah said the neglect of Kannada language in education has caused several problems.

"Children of the developed nations think, learn and dream in their mother tongue but here the situation is against it. English and Hindi are weakening the talent of our children just because of linguistic reasons," Siddaramaiah said.

He added that he welcomed migrants to the State, but they should learn Kannada. "Let us respect other languages. Let us love the language of the land."

Siddaramaiah said that the era of Information Technology was ending and that Artificial Intelligence would now take the centre stage, calling on industry leaders to develop AI models in Kannada.

Highlighting historic figures, he said, "Karnataka Rajyotsava is not just a festival. It is a sacred day that unites Kannadigas, who are spread across various states, through the umbilical cord of Kannada. —Agencies

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Nepal woman stopped from boarding flight, India denies bias

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Saturday clarified that Indian immigration authorities had no role in stopping a Nepali citizen, Shambhavi Adhikari, from travelling to Berlin via Delhi, stating that the issue was solely an airline decision based on visa rules.

In a statement, the MHA said reports suggesting Adhikari was barred at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport due to bias against Nepali citizens were "incorrect and misleading". The passenger had arrived from Kathmandu on an Air India flight and was transiting through Delhi for a connecting Qatar Airways service to Germany. According to the ministry, it was Qatar Airways that denied her boarding for the onward journey after assessing the validity of her German visa, following standard international procedures linked to destination-country requirements. She was subsequently flown back to Kathmandu by the airline. MEA added that international passengers are not required to interact with Indian immigration authorities. —PTI

> How do you bid farewell to something that gave your life its meaning? After 20 unforgettable years on tour, however, it's time..
> -Rohan Bopanna, Indian tennis veteran

ROHAN BOPANNA RETIRES

Indian tennis veteran Rohan Bopanna, one among the only four Indians to win Grand Slam titles, on Saturday announced his retirement from professional tennis, bringing an end to a career spanning more than two decades on the challenging ATP Tour.

SALAR NEWS TAKES A LOOK AT HIS 22-YEAR JOURNEY

CAREER SNAPSHOT

- **Turned Pro:** 2003.
- **ATP doubles titles:** 26.
- **Highest Ranking:** World No. 1 (29 Jan 2024).
- Represented India three times in Olympics.
- Has played Davis Cup for 21 years.

GRAND SLAM & MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2024 Australian Open: Men's Doubles Champion
  Oldest man in the Open Era to win a Grand Slam; became oldest first-time World No. 1 at 43.
- 2017 French Open: Mixed Doubles Champion
  One of only four Indians ever to win a Grand Slam title.
- Oldest ATP Masters 1000 Champion
  Won Miami Open 2024 (at 44), breaking his own record.
- 4 Grand slam finals (Runner-up)
- 2 × US Open Men's Doubles
- 2 × Australian Open Mixed Doubles
- Won Padma Shri Awardee in 2024

B'LURU COPS BUST RAVE PARTY, 100 DETAINED

BENGALURU, 1 NOV

Over 100 individuals were detained following a police raid on a farmhouse on the outskirts of Bengaluru city, where a suspected rave party was in progress. Authorities acted on a tip-off, leading a team from the Kaggalipura police station, under the leadership of Superintendent of Police R Srinivas Gowda, to the premises near Devigere Cross.

"A total of 102 people were taken into custody for medical examination to determine if they were under the influence of any narcotic substances," said a senior police officer. They were later released following the examinations, with notices to return for further questioning once the test results are available.

The preliminary investigations revealed that the party was organised via a WhatsApp group, primarily attended by individuals in their 20s from Bengaluru. The police also seized small quantities of marijuana during the raid, which have been sent for forensic analysis.

The property, functioning as a homestay, was operating without a licence.

"The organisers and the property owners have been questioned," the police added. A case is being registered against them, and further investigations are ongoing. —PTI

India shuts airbase in Tajikistan

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

- India reportedly invested around $100 million in developing the base, upgrading its facilities and extending the airstrip.

India has officially wrapped up its operations at the Ayni airbase in Tajikistan, a strategic location that has been under its management since 2002. The decision follows the expiry of a bilateral agreement between the Indian and Tajik governments four years ago, leading to India withdrawing its personnel and military equipment by early 2023.

The Ayni airbase, situated close to the Tajik capital Dushanbe and within proximity to Afghanistan, served as a crucial military asset for India. It offered a strategic foothold in Central Asia, enabling India to counter Pakistan's influence in the region, particularly in the context of Afghanistan. "Ayni was initially established to support the Northern Alliance against the Taliban," noted Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, highlighting the base's significant role in India's strategic diplomacy.

India reportedly invested around $100 million in developing the base, upgrading its facilities and extending the airstrip. The airbase also sees temporary deployments of military assets, including Su-30MKI fighter jets and helicopters.

However, following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in 2021, the strategic utility of the Ayni airbase diminished, and Tajikistan declined to extend the lease due to pressure from Russia and China against non-regional military personnel. "This is, without doubt, yet another setback for our strategic diplomacy," Ramesh commented on the withdrawal. As Russian forces reportedly take over the base, India's exit from Ayni signifies a shift in regional dynamics. —Agencies

FIRST IN COUNTRY

Kerala declared free from extreme poverty

T'PURAM, 1 NOV

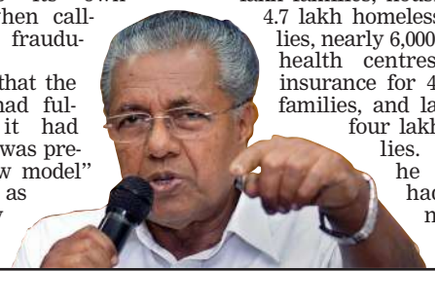
Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday declared in the Assembly that the state had eradicated extreme poverty, a claim that immediately triggered a boycott by the Congress-led UDF opposition.

The announcement was made during a special session convened to mark Kerala Piravi. However, even before proceedings began, Leader of the Opposition V D Satheesan termed the statement made under Rule 300 as "pure fraud" and "in contempt" of House rules. Alleging that the session was convened only for political publicity, the opposition walked out shouting slogans.

Responding in the House, Vijayan said the UDF was "referring to its own behaviour" when calling the claim fraudulent.

He asserted that the government had fulfilled what it had promised and was presenting a "new model" for the nation as a "laboratory of welfare initiatives".

The CM credited public participation and coordinated action across departments for the project, citing measures such as welfare pensions for 62 lakh families, housing for 4.7 lakh homeless families, nearly 6,000 public health centres, free insurance for 43 lakh families, and land for four lakh families. These, he said, had significantly reduced the depth of extreme poverty. He emphasised that sustaining the poverty-free status required "vigilant action", periodic inspections, and a blueprint already prepared for future interventions. The project, initiated by the second LDF government in 2021, began with pilot projects in Wadakkanchery, Anchuthengu and Thirunelli, later expanding statewide. Micro plans were created for 64,006 beneficiary families, supported by allocations of Rs 50 crore each in 2023–24 and 2024–25 and Rs 60 crore for 2025–26. —PTI



QUOTE of THE DAY

We celebrate the spirit of excellence and industrious nature that the people of Karnataka are synonymous with. We also celebrate the outstanding culture of Karnataka, reflected in its literature, art, music and more. The State embodies the spirit of progress rooted in wisdom.

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister's greeting for Karnataka Rajyotsava

Students and folk artistes put up a grand display for Karnataka Rajyotsava on Saturday at Sri Kanteerava Stadium in the City. They hold flags, maps as they dance to honour their heritage; People celebrate the State Formation Day in Belagavi (bottom right)
PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD/SALAR

PREPARE KANNADA FOR AI, SAYS CM

Pushes for educational reforms to include Kannada, says govt wants to take language global

BENGALURU, 1 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called upon scholars and technocrats to help transform Kannada into a language of modern technology.

"The era of Information Technology has now transformed into the age of Artificial Intelligence. There is also an apprehension that this may lead to job losses," he said in his address on Karnataka Rajyotsava in the City on Saturday. "The government is committed to preparing our language to meet the challenges of Artificial Intelligence so that employment is not affected."

Emphasising on educational reforms, Siddaramaiah said 800 government schools, each over a century old, would be upgraded as model institutions at a cost of Rs 4 crore each.

Eight-hundred Kannada schools and 100 Urdu schools would be developed as Karnataka Public Schools (KPS), while priority would be given to teaching Kannada in madrasas, he said. "Since there is a need to take the Kannada language and tradition to the global level, we are preparing a new policy for this purpose."

"To bring minority communities into the mainstream, primary Kannada is being taught as part of madrasa education. Currently, Kannada is being taught in 180 madrasas, and this will be extended to 1,500 across the State," he said.

Siddaramaiah said the State Education Policy Commission, chaired by Prof Sukhdev Thorat, had submitted its report, the first State-specific policy, which would soon be implemented.

On demands for a bilingual policy, he said, "I am personally in favour of bilingualism. But if the law is to be implemented, it will have to be discussed in the cabinet."

The CM paid homage to the martyrs of the unification movement, recalling figures such as Aluru Venkata Rao, Andanappa Doddameti, Gudleppa Hallikeri, Siddappa Kambli, RH Deshpande, Kaujalgi Srinivas Rao, and Kengal Hanumanthaiah. —*PTI*

The State government honours actor Prakash Raj and ex-Alliance Française President Zafer Mohiuddin with Rajyotsava Award. The award was given by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and DyCM DK Shivakumar in the City on Saturday
PHOTOS: MOHAMMAD ASAD

> **Those who live here should conduct themselves in Kannada... No matter who speaks to you in any language, you should answer in Kannada**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

CM'S PUSH FOR KANNADA

- 1,500 madrasas will begin teaching in Kannada.
- Rs 4 cr each to transform 800 govt schools that are over a century old into model institutions.
- The first State-specific education policy will soon be implemented.
- CM pushes for 60% Kannada signboard rule.

Bengaluru–Kochi Vande Bharat schedule unveiled

KOCHI, 1 NOV

The Ministry of Railways has unveiled the schedule for the soon-to-begin Bengaluru–Kochi Vande Bharat Express. According to a notification from the Railway Board, train number 26651 KSR Bengaluru–Ernakulam Junction will depart Bengaluru at 5.10am and arrive at Ernakulam Junction at 1.50pm. The return journey, train number 26652, will leave Ernakulam at 2.20pm, reaching Bengaluru at 11.00pm. This service will have stops at Krishnarajapuram, Salem, Erode, Tiruppur, Coimbatore, Palakkad, and Thrissur. The ministry has directed Southern Railway and South Western Railway zones to launch the service at the earliest. The notification also mentioned, "If required, the inaugural train may be operated as a special service." This marks the third Vande Bharat Express service in Kerala.—*PTI*

What is the role of CM? HDK flays potholes

KALABURAGI, 1 NOV

Union Minister and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy slammed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the ruling Congress for failing to reach the pothole deadline. Kumaraswamy said the government has "completely failed". Siddaramaiah had set an October deadline for officials to repair the City's pothole – a promise that wasn't met. When pressed on the issue on Friday, he snapped at a reporter and said "go ask (Deputy Chief Minister) DK Shivakumar" and left. "The CM and Deputy Chief Minister gave deadlines to the concerned officials of BBMP," Kumaraswamy told press. "Now the CM is putting the entire burden on the Deputy Chief Minister. So, what is the Chief Minister's role? He has to answer to the people." —*ANI*

Mother kills her 2 babies, dies by suicide

MYSURU, 1 NOV

A woman allegedly killed her two daughters before taking her own life in Bettadapura, Periyapatna taluk, on Saturday morning, police said.

The deceased, Arabiya Bhanu, in her twenties, is suspected to have slit the throats of her one-and-a-half-year-old daughter and her ten-day-old infant before dying by suicide. Bhanu's husband works at a mall in Bengaluru, while she had been staying with the children at her home in Bettadapura, police said. Initial inquiries suggest she may have taken the drastic step due to a family dispute. However, sources suggest that she may have committed the crime over societal backlash for having girl children.
—*Salar News*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.

MES observes 'Black Day' in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, 1 NOV

In open defiance of the State government's ban, pro-Maharashtrian organisations - Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) and the Shiv Sena (UBT) - observed a 'Black Day' protest in Belagavi on Karnataka Rajyotsava. They demanded that the region be absorbed into Maharashtra instead of being in Karnataka.

Dressed in black attire and carrying black flags, MES activists— including women and children—marched through parts of Belagavi South on Saturday and raised pro-Maharashtra slogans and chanted against the Karnataka government.

The police, despite denying permission for the event, were seen providing security to the unlawful procession, prompting outrage among Kannada organisations and citizens who called it an "insult" to the State.

The rally began at Dharmaveer Sambhaji Ground and moved through Batkande Nagar, Port Road and Patil Galli, before culminating in a meeting at a local community hall.

As the tensions flared, police detained at least 20 Karnataka Rakshna Vedike activists of who tried to barge into the hall where the pro-Maharashtrians were holding the meeting. They were later released.

The march took place as 4 lakh people gathered at Rani Channamma circle in Belagavi to celebrate Karnataka Rajyotsava.

MES members wore black during their Black Day procession in Belagavi, on Saturday
PHOTO: SALAR

> **MES people are also Kannadigas. If any of them makes a fuss, we will suppress it... There is no compromise on the Belavavi issue. The (1967) Mahajan report is final. Belagavi is Kannada land**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Meanwhile, Kolhapur (Hatakanagala) Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Dhairyasheel Mane and Kolhapur district Shiv Sena President Vijay Devane, who were on their way to Belagavi to attend the protest, were stopped by police at the Kognolli check-post near the Maharashtra–Karnataka border and sent back.

Meanwhile, a local police inspector faced flak after a selfie of him with MES leader Shubham Shelake surfaced on social media. The same officer had previously recommended Shelake's externment from the district. —*Salar News*

Kalyan Karnataka bodies demand a separate state

KALABURGI, 1 NOV

Members of Kalyana Karnataka Pratyeka Rajya Jagruti Samiti were detained for demanding a separate state for the Kalyana Karnataka region.

On Karnataka Rajyotsava Day, the Kalyan Karnataka Prathek Rajya Jagruti Samithi held a protest in Kalaburagi demanding a separate state for the Kalyan Karnataka region. The protesters claimed that the Kalyan Karnataka region has been neglected by the government for several years.

Sanjeev Kumar Dongargav, a member of the Samiti, demanded decentralisation, arguing that it would bring administration closer to the people.

"Karnataka is big, the population has increased since 1947, and there are various benefits for decentralisation. Due to decentralisation, basic services are provided, and governance control is with us, ensuring more equitable revenue distribution," said Dongargav. —*ANI*

Led by MLC H Vishwanath, Kannada activists protest infront of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Mysuru, on Saturday
PHOTO: SALAR

Mysuru protests delay in unveiling Devaraj Urs statue

MYSURU, 1 NOV

Tension prevailed in Mysuru on Saturday as Kannada activists led by former minister and MLC H Vishwanath protested in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office, condemning the delay in unveiling the statue of former chief minister D Devaraj Urs.

The statue, installed in the premises of the new DC's office at Siddharth Nagar, has been ready for several months, but authorities have yet to announce an inauguration date.

Protesters attempted to march towards the DC's office but were stopped by police.

Vishwanath said that former chief minister BS Yediyurappa had sanctioned Rs 92 lakh for the project, the foundation stone was laid last year, and all works, including installation, were completed.

However, the Congress has said that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will unveil the statue on 3 November. Siddaramaiah said that the government would try to grant Urs a doctorate from Mysuru University. —*Salar News*

TO FORM COMMITTEE ON TUNNEL ROAD

Only what CM and I say matters, says DKS on 'Nov revolution'

BENGALURU, 1 NOV

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday played down the "November Revolution", asserting that there was complete unity within the ruling Congress.

"Only what the Chief Minister and I have spoken matters. Apart from that, no one else's words carry any value," the Deputy Chief Minister said, dismissing political rumours.

Speaking to reporters near the Kanteerava Stadium, Shivakumar stressed that the government's focus remained on governance and development, not speculation.

He underlined that his coordination with Chef Minister Siddaramaiah was intact and that "it is precisely because of our unity that we have won 136 constituencies and increased our strength to 140.

TUNNEL ROAD

On the issue of proposed tunnel road project in the City, which the BJP has been opposing, Shivakumar said, "I am ready to form a committee on the tunnel road issue under the leadership of (Opposition Leader) R Ashoka. The entry and exit points near Lalbagh will be designed at the place he suggests."

Clarifying that he was open to a bipartisan approach on City infrastructure, Shivakumar said, "There is no need for Ashoka to sit on a demonstration (on 2 November) because he is from Bengaluru. He has won from here seven to eight times. He too has a responsibility. The committee formed under his leadership itself should give advice and direction to the government. Whoever's names, including Malleswaram MLA CN Ashwath Narayan, he suggests, they will be added to this committee. We all must work together and we will."

Shivakumar revealed that he had personally inspected the tunnel road site near Lalbagh on Friday night.

"I visited the area near Lalbagh to examine where entry points could be provided. I am also considering alternative routes," he said. —*PTI*

> **'Will study Mumbai model to clean the City'**
>
> Shivakumar said that he was mulling cleaning the garbage from the City with a model similar to Mumbai. "I was just in Bombay," he said. "(Over there), cleaning of the roads is done by the Road Contractors itself." He said it was a "very good concept" and should be implement in Karnataka. He also defended the GBA initiative to dump garbage back at the doorstep of serial litterers, urging the public to cooperate to make Bengaluru cleaner.

PHOTO: ANI

BJP MP calls for renaming of Delhi 'Indraprastha'

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

BJP MP Praveen Khandelwal has urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to rename Delhi as "Indraprastha" to honour its ancient identity and cultural heritage. In a letter, he stated, "Delhi holds a special place among the ancient cultural centres of India... It is not merely a metropolis but a living symbol of Indian civilisation." Khandelwal proposed renaming both the Delhi airport and Old Delhi railway station to Indraprastha Airport and Indraprastha Railway Station, respectively, and suggested establishing a prominent statue of the Pandavas in key locations. He emphasised that renaming the capital would revive India's cultural heritage and strengthen national pride, noting, "Delhi will once again emerge as a spiritual, cultural, and civilisational symbol of Bharat." —*PTI*

Assam row: Gogoi slams Himanta's Pak agent claim

GUWAHATI, 1 NOV

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has accused state Congress president Gaurav Gogoi of being a "Pakistani agent planted by a foreign power." Gogoi hit back, calling Sarma "unfit" to lead the state and accusing him of trying to divert attention on the day of late cultural icon Zubeen Garg's final film Roi Roi Binale release. Garg, who drowned in Singapore in September, is being investigated by a CID-led SIT, which Sarma said will file its chargesheet by 10 December. The chief minister claimed he has evidence linking Gogoi to Pakistan through his British wife and vowed to pursue the case after ensuring justice in Garg's death. Gogoi said Sarma's remarks reflected his fear of losing power. —*PTI*

Shiv Sena is Thackerays: M'rashtra BJP Chief

MUMBAI, 1 NOV

Amidst the ongoing power struggle between factions of the Shiv Sena and NCP, Maharashtra BJP minister Chandrakant Patil remarked that while the Shiv Sena is synonymous with Uddhav Thackeray, the same is true for the NCP and its founder Sharad Pawar. Speaking at a public event in Sangli, Patil said, "Shiv Sena was always known as Balasaheb Thackeray's party, then Uddhav Thackeray's party, and maybe in the future it will be known as Aditya Thackeray's party. The same is true with the NCP, which was always known as Sharad Pawar's party, but never as a party of workers." He contrasted this with the BJP, which he described as "always known as a party of its karyakarta."—*PTI*

TMC flays BJP over Bengal woman's deportation

KOLKATA, 1 NOV

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) has alleged that the deported Sonali Bibi's parents were listed as Indian citizens in the 2002 voter rolls from West Bengal's Birbhum district. The party condemned the federal government's deportation actions, calling them "an assault on the very idea of Bengal and its people." The Calcutta High Court had previously ruled that Sonali Khatun, who was pregnant at the time, and her family be returned to India within a month. However, this order has been challenged by the Union government in the Supreme Court. The TMC accused the BJP of using the SIR of electoral rolls for political gain, stating, "To brand an expectant mother as an illegal infiltrator when her parents stand documented as Indian citizens... is a moral collapse in the name of nationalism." —*PTI*

No double-engine in Bihar, says Priyanka

She says privatisation is rampant under NDA

PATNA/BEGUSARAI, 1 NOV

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday launched her assembly poll campaign in Bihar, and claimed that neither the people nor Chief Minister Nitish Kumar were getting respect as the double-engine government was being "run from Delhi".

Vadra, who was scheduled to address two rallies during the day, had to cancel the one at Khagaria as her helicopter could not take off due to bad weather. She, however, travelled by road from Patna for the election meeting in Begusarai.

Before leaving for Begusarai, she briefly interacted with journalists here, criticising the NDA for "failing" to fulfil poll promises during the two-decade-long rule in Bihar, and voicing confidence that the INDIA bloc will form the next government.

Additionally, Vadra alleged that the NDA government at the Centre and in Bihar have been indulging in divisive politics and propagating "fake nationalism" to win elections. Bihar contributed so much to the country's growth, but the state was not developed as it should have been, she claimed.

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during a public meeting ahead of Bihar Assembly elections, in Begusarai district PHOTO: PTI

Claiming that privatisation is rampant in the NDA rule, she alleged, "The PM handed over big PSUs to his corporate friends".

Meanwhile, RJD leader and Mahagathbandhan's chief ministerial candidate Tejashwi Yadav on Saturday accused the ruling BJP-NDA of "protecting criminals" and questioned the Election Commission's silence, days after a man was shot dead during clashes in Bihar's Mokama as campaigning for the Bihar Assembly polls gained momentum.

Yadav, a former Deputy Chief Minister, also alleged that cash was being distributed ahead of polling for assembly elections and criticised the Election Commission for its "inaction". —*Agencies*

In Lalu's turf, Shah's 'jungle raj' attack

Nadda targets RJD over Shahabuddin's son

PATNA, 1 NOV

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday asserted that the assembly elections in Bihar presented the people with a choice between the "Modi-Nitish combine", which would develop Bihar, and the RJD-helmed opposition that would "bring back jungle raj".

The former BJP president said this while virtually addressing rallies in Gopalganj and Samastipur districts.

In Gopalganj, he raked up the "high-handedness" of Sadhu Yadav, former Bihar CM Rabri Devi's estranged brother, to warn people that "jungle raj" will come back if the opposition party returned to power.

Yadav, who had been both the MLA and the MP from Gopalganj, had forcefully driven away with cars from a showroom during Rabri Devi's eldest daughter Misa Bharti's wedding in 1999.

Shah also mentioned the villages where massacres that took place during the RJD rule when several districts were in the throes of a bloody feud between outlawed Naxal groups and private militias of upper caste landlords.

Shah also spoke of the promises made by the ruling NDA in the manifesto released a day earlier. In Samastipur, he slammed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for trying to protect infiltrators" by leading the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra'.

Meanwhile, BJP president JP Nadda alleged nominating late gangster-turned-politician Mohammad Shahabuddin's son proves that the RJD wants to bring back 'jungle raj' to the state.

Nadda alleged that kidnapping had become an industry during 'jungle raaj' (lawlessness) and ransom used to be settled at the then CM's house. The RJD has fielded Shahabuddin's son Osama Shahab in Siwan's Raghunathpur seat.

"Don't vote for RJD as its leaders, Lalu, Rabri, Tejashwi and Misa Bharti, are all out on bail," he said. —*PTI*

Union Home Minister Amit Shah virtually addressed rallies in Gopalganj and Samastipur districts PHOTO: PTI

- JP Nadda alleged nominating late gangster-turned-politician Mohammad Shahabuddin's son proves that RJD wants to bring back 'jungle raj' to the state.

CPI(M) releases manifesto, accuses NDA of bad campaign

PATNA, 1 NOV

The CPI(M), which is a part of the opposition INDIA bloc, on Saturday released its manifesto for the Assembly elections in Bihar.

Senior CPI(M) leader **Brinda Karat** charged the ruling NDA with carrying out a "negative campaign" in the polls and slandering opposition leaders out of "desperation".

Referring to the killing of Jan Suraaj Party supporter Dular Chand Yadav in Mokama, where supporters of the deceased have been alleging the complicity of local JD(U) candidate and former MLA Anant Singh, Karat said that "incident is proof that mafia raj and jungle raj prevail in Bihar under the NDA rule".

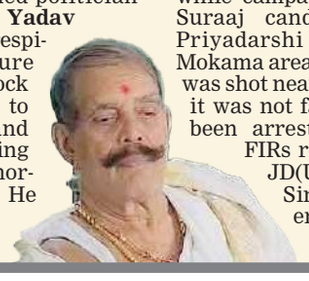
"Lawlessness is not something that the INDIA bloc is going to bring to the state," she added.

Karat also expressed bewilderment over Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma calling Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi "an agent of Pakistan".

The CPI(M) leader said her party's manifesto was in line with the INDIA bloc's commitment to ensuring employment generation in Bihar, from where "people are forced to migrate in search of livelihood to other places. —*PTI*

Jan Suraaj Party leader died of cardiac failure

Gangster-turned-politician **Dular Chand Yadav** died of cardiorespiratory failure caused by shock from injuries to his heart and lungs, according to his post-mortem report. He collapsed while campaigning for Jan Suraaj candidate Piyush Priyadarshi in Patna's Mokama area. Police said he was shot near the ankle, but it was not fatal. Two have been arrested and three FIRs registered, with JD(U) leader Anant Singh among others. —*PTI*



Sengottaiyan to challenge his expulsion from AIADMK

ERODE, 1 NOV

Former minister **KA Sengottaiyan** on Saturday said that he will discuss with advocates on moving court challenging the decision of AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi Palaniswamy to expel him from the party.

The nine-time MLA said, "A 'temporary General Secretary' of AIADMK expelled me from the party, in which I am a member for 53 years, without asking for any explanation about speaking with OPS and others at Pasumpon".

Earlier, he claimed that Palaniswamy was responsible for the continuous defeat of AIADMK in Elections since 2021. He also insisted on the readmission of the expelled leaders, like O Panneerselvam, into the party.

Meanwhile, Palaniswami said that Sengottaiyan's expulsion for bringing disrepute to the AIADMK was unanimously made by the party's general council and this was final and binding.

- Sengottaiyan claimed that Palaniswamy was responsible for the continuous defeat of AIADMK in Elections since 2021. He demanded the readmission of Panneerselvam into the party.

Indicating that a person of Sengottaiyan's stature should not covertly function as the "B team" of the ruling DMK, Palaniswami claimed that the former has been indulging in anti-party activities since the last six months.

"Sengottaiyan boycotted my felicitation function on Athikadavu Avinashi project, saying there's no portrait of party leaders MGR and Jayalalithaa at the event organised by farmers in his home district of Erode," Palaniswami said.

The function was organised by farmers in Annur in Coimbatore to thank him for sanctioning funds for the major irrigation project during his tenure as Chief Minister. 30 per cent of the project benefited Erode district, he said.

Sengottaiyan attended a function where photos of late Chief Minister M Karunanidhi and Chief Minister MK Stalin were displayed. —*PTI*

Collective security key to sovereignty of nations: Rajnath at ASEAN

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

India believes Indo-Pacific should remain open, inclusive, and free from any form of coercion, Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** said on Saturday against the backdrop of mounting global concerns over China's aggressive military posturing in the region.

In an address at a conclave of defence ministers of ASEAN member states and the bloc's dialogue partners in Kuala Lumpur, Singh pitched for an approach of "collective security" to ensure the sovereignty of every nation in the region.

The defence minister said India's emphasis on adherence to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and support for freedom of navigation and overflight is not against any country but to protect the interests of all regional stakeholders.

His remarks came amid consistent demands by several ASEAN member states as well as democratic nations for adherence to UNCLOS in the face of Beijing's increasing military muscle flexing in the contested South China Sea.

"India's security will not depend solely on military capabilities, but on the management of shared resources," he said. —*PTI*

WB BLOs demand official duty status, security

KOLKATA, 1 NOV

The Election Commission on Saturday began a training programme for over 80,000 Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in West Bengal for the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, even as a section of participants raised demands for enhanced security arrangements and transparency in carrying out their duties. The EC would train booth level agents (BLAs), representatives of political parties on Sunday and Monday. The training programme would be completed by 3 November. Each BLO was being provided with a kit, including identity cards and a cap. —*PTI*

SAYS BJP BENEFITTED FROM IT

After rift, M'rashtra Oppn unites & marches against vote theft

MUMBAI, 1 NOV

The Maha Vikas Aghadi comprising the Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP) along with Maharashtra Navnirman Sena on Saturday took out the 'Satyacha Morcha', a protest march against alleged irregularities in the voters list.

The Opposition has been claiming that not addressing these irregularities only helped the ruling BJP.

The 'Satyacha Morcha' (march for truth) began from Fashion Street in the southern part of the metropolis in the afternoon and culminated at the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation headquarters a kilometre away, with former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, NCP (SP) supremo Sharad Pawar, MNS' RajThackeray and Congress leaders Balasaheb Thorat, among others, participating.

Opposition parties hold a protest march against the irregularities in the voters' list in Mumbai on Saturday PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

They addressed a rally at the end of the march to highlight the irregularities in the voters' list, which included multiple entries, wrongful deletions and additions, etc.

The Opposition has accused the Election Commission of India of turning a blind eye to the issue and have asserted that local body polls in Maharashtra should be held only after the shortcomings are rectified.

Congress leaders Naseem Khan, Satej Patil and Bhai Jagtap, NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule also walked along with thousands of functionaries. —*Agencies*

Modi says Maoist terror in India is nearing its end

RAIPUR, 1 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday declared that India was on the verge of eradicating Maoist insurgency, with the number of affected districts having reduced from 125 to just three in the past 11 years. Addressing the Chhattisgarh Rajat Mahotsav in Nava Raipur to mark 25 years since the state's formation, Modi said Chhattisgarh had evolved from being associated with Naxal violence to symbolising prosperity, stability and development.

Modi expressed satisfaction that the state was breaking free from decades of Naxal violence, crediting the government's efforts to extend roads, electricity, schools and healthcare to tribal regions long neglected by previous administrations. He highlighted that hundreds of Maoists had surrendered recently, choosing peace over violence.

The Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation for projects worth Rs 14,260 crore across key sectors including roads, energy, industry and healthcare. He also inaugurated the new Chhattisgarh Assembly building, unveiled a statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and opened the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Memorial and Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum in Nava Raipur.

Modi said the Viksit Bharat mission would advance India's progress through strong, self-reliant states. He also stressed India's role as a reliable global partner and "first responder" in times of international crisis. —*PTI*

PM Narendra Modi during inauguration of the new building of Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly, in Chhattisgarh, on Saturday PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: ANI

Hyderabad bound IndiGo flight gets bomb threat

HYDERABAD, 1 NOV

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport here received a threat email on Saturday claiming that there was a "human bomb" onboard a flight (IndiGo) from Jeddah to Hyderabad, following which the aircraft was diverted to Mumbai where it landed safely. The airport authorities lodged a complaint with police, saying the threat mail warned them to prevent landing of the flight in Hyderabad as onboard LTTE-ISI operatives have planned a major blast. All stakeholders were alerted and security checks conducted, though no threat was found. Based on the complaint a case was registered. The police are investigating the matter. "We made all efforts to minimise inconvenience to our customers ...," IndiGo stated in a statement. *—PTI*

Dikshant IAS, Abhimanu IAS, fined for false ads

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 8 lakh each on Dikshant IAS and Abhimanu IAS for misleading advertisements, unfair trade practices and violating consumer rights under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The action followed complaints from UPSC qualifiers whose names and photographs were used without consent in promotional material falsely claiming credit for their success. Dikshant IAS could not substantiate its claim of "200+ UPSC results", while Abhimanu IAS was found making unverified claims such as "2200+ selections since inception" ". Both institutes concealed that many candidates had only attended mock interviews. Fines of over Rs 98.6 lakh were imposed on institutes. *—PTI*

Ladakh polls delayed over admin changes

LEH, 1 NOV

The Ladakh administration has deferred elections for the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, citing ongoing administrative changes and the implementation of women's reservation. The council's five-year term ended on 30 October, and Deputy Commissioner Romil Singh has been appointed to oversee its affairs until fresh elections are held. Officials said the process of creating five new districts three in Leh and two in Kargil and the need to redraw council boundaries under amendments to the LAHDC Act, 1997, providing one-third reservation for women, made immediate elections impracticable. The delay follows clashes in Leh on 24 September during a strike called by the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance, demanding statehood and Sixth Schedule status. *—PTI*

50 T'gana students fall ill after eating dinner at hostel

HYDERABAD, 1 NOV

As many as 52 students from a welfare hostel for boys in Jogulamba Gadwal district in Telangana were hospitalised afterthey experienced vomiting and stomach pain following dinner on 31 October. The affected students from Dharmavaram in Itikyala mandal were admitted to a government hospital, where doctors reported that they are now clinically stable. According to a district health official, thirty-two students have been discharged while the others remain under observation. The students reported consuming a meal that included sambar, rice, and cabbage curry on the night in question. An official confirmed that a medical camp has been established at the hostel to monitor the health of the residents. *—PTI*

Same entry-exit caused temple tragedy

Andhra CM Naidu says the temple management did not inform police about the crowd

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

An under-construction temple, a common entry-exit, and an Ekadashi rush seem to be the circumstances that led to the stampede at Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple in Andhra Pradesh's Srikakulam resulting in 10 deaths.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said that if the police had been informed in advance, they could have managed the crowd.

Two people were critically injured, while others suffered minor injuries.

Harimukunda Panda, built the temple dedicated to Lord Venkateswara on his land. The temple, called 'Chinna Tirupati' opened to devotees just four months back and was modelled on the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Tirumala.

Objects littered around the entrance of the 'Chinna Tirupati' Temple in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh in the aftermath of the stampede that occurred in the morning on Saturday PHOTO: PTI

The temple has a common entry and exit point, with handrails flanking the narrow passage. Visuals from the temple show scores of women stuck in the narrow space. Puja baskets in hands, many of them gasped for air and screaming for help.

Some videos show heartbreaking scenes of people trying to give CPR to the victims and rubbing their palms and feet in a desperate effort to save their lives.

- Endowments Minister Anam R Reddy said that while the capacity of this temple is only up to 2,000 to 3,000 people, about 25,000 people arrived here for Ekadashi on Saturday

The temple management neither had any crowd management plans, nor informed the local administration about the expected Ekadashi rush.

Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, the Endowments Minister of Andhra Pradesh, said the temple where the tragedy occurred is not managed by the state government.

While the capacity of this temple is only up to 2,000 to 3,000 people, about 25,000 people arrived here on Saturday.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office has announced an ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each to the next of kin of those who lost their lives in the stampede. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000 each.

"My thoughts are with those who have lost their near and dear ones. I pray that the injured recover soon," Modi said.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has expressed shock over the tragedy and described the deaths as "heartbreaking". "The stampede incident at the Venkateswara Temple in Kashibugga in Srikakulam district hcaused a shock. The death of devotees in this tragic incident is extremely heartbreaking. I express my deepest condolences to the families of the deceased. I have instructed the officials to provide speedy and proper treatment to those who have been injured," Modi said. *—PTI*

A 4.410 KG MARVEL

ISRO to launch heaviest satellite for naval operations

SRIHARIKOTA, 1 NOV

ISRO's over 4,000 kg communication satellite CMS-03 is all set to be launched from this space port on Sunday.

The satellite, weighing about 4,410 kg will be the heaviest to be launched from the Indian soil and into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).The satellite will travel onboard a LVM3-M5 rocket, dubbed as 'Bahubali' for its heavylift capability.

The launch vehicle has been fully assembled and integrated with the spacecraft and it has been moved to the second launch pad here for taking up pre-launch operations, the Bengaluru-headquartered space agency said.

The 43.5 metre tall rocket is scheduled for a 5.26 pm liftoff on 2 November.

LVM3- (Launch Vehicle Mark-3), ISRO's new heavy lift launch vehicle, is used for placing 4,000 kg spacecraft in GTO in a cost-effective manner, ISRO said.

The satellite will be launched from Sriharikota PHOTO: X/ISRO

This three stage launch vehicle with two solid motor strapons (S200), a liquid propellant core stage (L110) and a cryogenic stage (C25) gives ISRO full self-reliance in launching heavier communication satellites that weigh up to 4,000 kg in GTO.

LVM3- is also termed by ISRO scientists as Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) MkIII.

The LVM3-M5 is the fifth operational flight, ISRO said.

The space agency had previously launched its heaviest communication satellite GSAT-11, weighing 5,854 kg, on 5 December, 2018 from Kourou launch base in French Guiana.

The CMS-03 will provide services over a wide oceanic region including the Indian landmass, ISRO said. *—PTI*

Delhi bans commercial vehicles amid smog crisis

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Transport Department and Traffic Police teams were deployed in Delhi's borders on Saturday as the ban on the entry of all non-Delhi registered commercial goods vehicles compliant with BS-III or lower emission standards came into force in the city.

The Transport Department, in collaboration with the Traffic Police, has formed 23 teams for enforcement purposes.

The teams were deployed in Kundli border, Rajokri border, Tikri border, Aya Nagar border, Kalindi Kunj border, Auchandi border, Mandoli, Kapashera and Bajghera toll/Dwarka Expressway, etc.

According to the officials, an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 vehicles are below BS-IV emission standards.

There will be no restrictions on the entry of commercial goods vehicles registered in Delhi, BS-VI compliant vehicles, or vehicles running on CNG, LNG, or electricity.

An anti-smog gun is being used to spray water droplets to curb air pollution, near Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) approved the ban to address the city's pollution woes.

Meanwhile, Delhi's air quality remained in the 'poor' category on Saturday, with the overall AQI rising slightly to 251 from 218 the day before, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data showed. The air quality index at eight stations was recorded in the 'very poor' category, while it was 'poor' at others. *—PTI*

Sabarimala ex-officer arrested in gold theft

PATHANAMTHITTA, 1 NOV

The special investigation team (SIT) probing the alleged disappearance of gold from the Sabarimala temple has arrested former executive officer Sudheesh Kumar.

Kumar, who served as the executive officer of the hill shrine in 2019, was arrested after being questioned at the Crime Branch office in Thiruvananthapuram.

He has been accused of concealing that the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idols were gold-plated, instead recording them as copper sheets in the temple's official documents.

- Kumar has been accused of concealing that the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idols were gold-plated, instead recording them as copper sheets in the temple's official documents.

Kumar had been associated with Sabarimala since the 1990s and was aware that the sanctum sanctorum, including the Dwarapalaka idols, had been gold-clad during 1998–99.

However, when the Dwarapalaka plates were handed over to the prime accused, Unnikrishnan Potty, for gold plating in 2019, Kumar allegedly documented them as copper plates, enabling the accused to later remove the existing gold plating.

Kumar will be produced before the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court later, officials said. Meanwhile, the SIT also interrogated Vasudevan, a close aide of Potty.

Investigators said Vasudevan had kept the additional gold-clad pedestal of the Dwarapalaka idols in his custody, which was seized from the house of Potty's relative in Thiruvananthapuram. *—PTI*

IT unearths Rs 330 cr Kerala crypto hawala racket

MALAPPURAM, 1 NOV

The Income Tax (IT) Investigation Wing has uncovered a significant hawala racket involving cryptocurrency transactions, allegedly run by two Malappuram residents disguised as flower exporters.

An IT official stated that searches were conducted over the past three days across various locations in Malappuram and Kozhikode districts as part of the investigation. The inquiry targets a firm owned by the duo, which has exported flowers to Indonesia for years. Investigators revealed that payments were received via cryptocurrency channels rather than traditional banking methods. To obscure the money trail, they allegedly created multiple crypto wallets in the names of different individuals, including students.

Around Rs 330 crore worth of transactions were routed through cryptocurrencies. The Enforcement Directorate will probe the case. *—PTI*

INCREDIBLE INDIA

States celebrate Formation Day, honour diversity

ANDHRA PRADESH

This was the first state created on the basis of language. Andhra came into existence on 1 November, 1956, when the state of Hyderabad was split up under the States Reorganisation Act

KERALA

Kerala, renowned for its scenic beauty and high literacy, was formed in 1956 through the merger of the Travancore-Cochin state with Malabar from the Madras Presidency and the Kasaragod taluk of South Canara. Marking Malayalam Language Day and Official Language Week on Saturday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan honoured Malayalam teacher KK Sarasamma and writer MM Basheer

HARYANA

The state was carved out of Punjab on 1 November, 1966, based on linguistic lines, Streets are filled with events like bicycle races and foot races. The state is known for its rich history and significant contributions to agriculture and sports. Haryana marked the day with vibrant celebrations and events with cultural events and dance

CHHATTISGARH

It was the 26th state to be created in India and was carved out of Madhya Pradesh on 1 November, 2000. Chhattisgarh is known as the "rice bowl of India", which traditionally refers to the delta region formed by the Krishna and Godavari rivers. Artiste perform during the foundation celebrations

MADHYA PRADESH

Located in the heart of India, Madhya Pradesh was reorganised on 1 November, 1956. Madhya Pradesh is known for its dense forest reserves and wildlife. It is a significant contributor to the country's agricultural production. MP CM Mohan Yadav interacts with artistes during the foundation day celebrations in Bhopal

Lucknow is UNESCO's Creative City for culinary heritage

UNITED NATIONS, 1 NOV

Lucknow has been added to UNESCO's Creative Cities Network in recognition of its rich and diverse culinary heritage, earning the title of Creative City of Gastronomy. The announcement, made on World Cities Day 30 October, 2025, marks a proud moment for India as the Uttar Pradesh capital joins 58 newly designated cities across more than 100 countries.

Renowned for its Awadhi cuisine, mouth-watering street food such as chaat, and exquisite desserts, Lucknow's culinary legacy reflects centuries of cultural fusion and refinement. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), established in 2004, now includes 408 cities and promotes creativity and culture as key drivers of sustainable urban development.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said the new members demonstrate how culture and creative industries can support local initiatives, attract investment, and strengthen social cohesion. Through the network, cities collaborate, share experiences, and develop innovative solutions to social, economic, and environmental challenges. Other cities include New Orleans (US) and Kisumu (Kenya) for Music, Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) for Design, Cuenca (Ecuador) and Matosinhos (Portugal) for Gastronomy, and Giza (Egypt) for films. *—PTI*

RAGE OVER RIO RAID

A protester lights candles during a protest in São Paulo, as anger erupts over the deadliest police raid in Rio de Janeiro's history. Hundreds marched through Vila Cruzeiro in the Penha favela complex, demanding the resignation of Rio state Governor Claudio Castro, denounced by protesters as an 'assassin', after a massive operation targeting the Red Command gang left at least 121 people dead, including four police officers. Some 2,500 police and soldiers stormed the favelas, triggering chaos and retaliation ***PHOTO: PTI***

Maithili Thakur hits the high notes in Alinagar battle

High profile leaders including Home Minister Amit Shah have been campaigning for Maithili Thakur ***PHOTO: PTI***

When a petite teenager from Bihar began making waves in the world of music about a decade ago, few would have thought that the demure girl would end up in the rough and tumble of politics.

Maithili Thakur, who turned 25 just a few months ago, is not surprisingly one of the most talked-about candidates in the Bihar assembly elections.

"I am planning to build a house in Alinagar and make the place my home. My maternal roots are here. I do not want to live anywhere else", says Thakur, who is being targeted, primarily, for being an "outsider" in the assembly segment of Darbhanga district.

The singer-politician, who is fluent in the local dialect Maithili, has her roots in the adjoining district of Madhubani and, for some time, has been settled in Delhi along with her parents and siblings.

Although she joined the BJP only as late as October 14, ahead of the two-phased Bihar elections, political watchers began looking forward to her entry about a fortnight earlier.

On October 5, just a day before the elections were announced, her photo with BJP national general secretary Vinod Tawde and Union minister Nityanand Rai, a former state president of the party, went viral on social media.

Tawde, who is the party's in charge for Bihar, wrote on X, "Famous singer Maithili Thakur belongs to one of the families which had fled Bihar in the wake of Lalu raj that began in 1995. With changed times, she wants to come back".

Although the announcement of her candidature was several days away, the cat was let out of the bag by Mishri Lal Yadav, the sitting BJP MLA from Alinagar who quit the party four days ahead of Thakur's joining.

Yadav alleged that the BJP was "giving a raw deal to Dalits and backwards" and while he took no names, the proverbial writing on the wall was there for all to see.

Thakur is a Brahmin. And so is her main rival Binod Mishra, the RJD candidate, at least 35 years her senior, whose party affiliation assures him of solid support of Muslims and Yadavs.

The three communities - Brahmin, Muslims and Yadavs- are said to be the most populous in the constituency.

The assembly segment came into being only after the 2008 delimitation, and in the first two assembly polls that it faced, in 2010 and 2015, the winner was veteran RJD leader Abdul Bari Siddiqui.

In 2020, the party fielded Mishra, who lost to Mishri Lal Yadav, a candidate of the then NDA constituent Vikassheel Insan Party.

Referring to Yadav, who hails from adjoining Keoti, Mishra told PTI Bhasha, "For the last five years, the people of Alinagar have paid the price of electing an outsider. They do not want to make the same mistake this time. Moreover, Maithili Thakur may be a great singer, but she is a novice in politics".

Admittedly, the most talked-about candidate in the constituency, where altogether a dozen are in the fray, evinces more interest out of her singing abilities than her political skills.

Be it the filing of nomination papers or a rally where she shared the stage with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, people applauded her not for her speeches but for her soulful renditions.

Nonetheless, the BJP, with its famed election machinery, is backing her to the hilt. Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan, the party's election in charge for the state assembly polls, is personally monitoring her campaign.

Pradhan had also offered an apology on Thakur's behalf when Uttar Pradesh MLA Ketki Singh stoked a controversy that it was Maithili and not the "Mithila paag", the traditional headgear of the area, that was "the pride" of the region.

Thakur's naivete was all too evident when a video went viral in which she was caught eating "makhana" kept on a "Mithila paag". She later came out with an explanation that the 'paag' was kept in place of a plate "by way of a conspiracy".

Nonetheless, local BJP worker Kaushal Chaudhary said, "Maithili Thakur has a clean image which goes in her favour. Besides, the party activists will leave no stone unturned in ensuring her victory". Situated about 50km from the state headquarters of Darbhanga, Alinagar is frequently ravaged by floods in the rivers Kamala and Kosi. Its 2.84 lakh voters will decide the fate of 12 candidates on 6 November, in the first phase of assembly polls. —PTI

SALAR

Egypt unveils world's largest museum to lure in tourists

Egypt is inaugurating on Saturday the Grand Egyptian Museum, two decades in the making, with the aim of drawing more visitors to revitalise the country's tourist industry.

Located just outside Cairo on the Giza Plateau, which also includes the three pyramids and the Sphinx, the museum will be the world's largest dedicated to a single civilisation. It will display over 50,000 artefacts detailing life in ancient Egypt.

World leaders, including monarchs, heads of state and governments, are set to attend the grand opening ceremony, according to the Egyptian presidency, which touted the museum as "an exceptional event in the history of human culture and civilisation."

The museum is one of the megaprojects championed by President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi since he took office in 2014. He has embarked on massive investments in infrastructure with the aim of reviving an economy weakened by decades of stagnation and battered by the unrest that followed the 2011 Arab Spring uprising.

Preparations for the grand reveal have been shrouded in secrecy. The museum, which was opened for limited visits in recent years, has been closed for the past two weeks.

The government has revamped the areas around the museum and the nearby Giza Pyramids. Roads were paved, and a metro station is being constructed outside the museum gates to improve access. An airport, Sphinx International Airport, has also opened west of Cairo, 40 minutes from the museum.

The USD 1 billion facility had faced multiple delays, with construction beginning in 2005 but interrupted due to political instability.

The museum, known as GEM, boasts a towering, triangular glass facade imitating the nearby pyramids, with 24,000 square meters (2,58,000 square feet) of permanent exhibition space.

From the atrium, a grand six-story staircase lined with ancient statues leads up to the main galleries and a view of the nearby pyramids. A bridge links the museum to the pyramids, allowing tourists to move between them either on foot or via electric vehicles, according to museum officials.

The museum's 12 main galleries, which opened last year, exhibit antiquities spanning from prehistoric times to the Roman era, organised by era and by themes.

Two halls are dedicated to the 5,000 artefacts from the collection of King Tutankhamun, which will be displayed in its entirety for the first time since British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered King Tut's tomb in 1922 in the southern city of Luxor.

Zahi Hawass, Egypt's most renowned archaeologist and former minister of antiquities, said the collection of Tutankhamun is the masterpiece of the museum.

"Why is this museum so important, and everyone is waiting for the opening?" he told The Associated Press. "Because of Tutankhamun."

The government's aim is that the museum will draw more tourists who will stay for a while and provide the foreign currency Egypt needs to shore up its battered economy.

The tourism sector has suffered during years of political turmoil and violence following the 2011 Arab Spring uprising. —*PTI*

20 YEARS LATER, EGYPT'S GRAND MUSEUM FINALLY OPENS

Two decades after construction began beside the Great Pyramid of Khufu, Egypt has finally opened the Grand Egyptian Museum — the world's largest archaeological showcase. Here is all you need to know about it

LOCATION: Adjacent to the Great Pyramid of Khufu, Giza.

Features

- World's largest archaeological museum.
- 1,00,000 artefacts.
- Covers 7,000 years of history (Pre-dynastic to Greek & Roman eras).
- Total area: 5,00,000 sq m (= 70 football pitches).
- Features a striking triangular glass façade inspired by the pyramids, with 24,000 sq m of permanent exhibition space.
- The Grand staircase is lined with statues of pharaohs & queens

Cost and construction

- Cost: $1.2 billion
- Proposed: 1992 | Construction: 2005–2025
- Delays due to: financial crises, Arab Spring (2011), Covid-19, regional conflicts.
- Expected visitors: up to 8 million/year.

STAR ATTRACTIONS

Tutankhamun Collection

The Grand Egyptian Museum will, for the first time, showcase all 5,000 artefacts found in the tomb of King Tutankhamun, exactly as they were discovered in 1922.

The collection includes:

- Three ceremonial funeral beds.
- Six chariots used for hunting and warfare.
- His golden throne with detailed inlays.
- The gold-covered sarcophagus.
- And the star attraction: the gold funerary mask, made from gold, quartzite, lapis lazuli, and coloured glass.

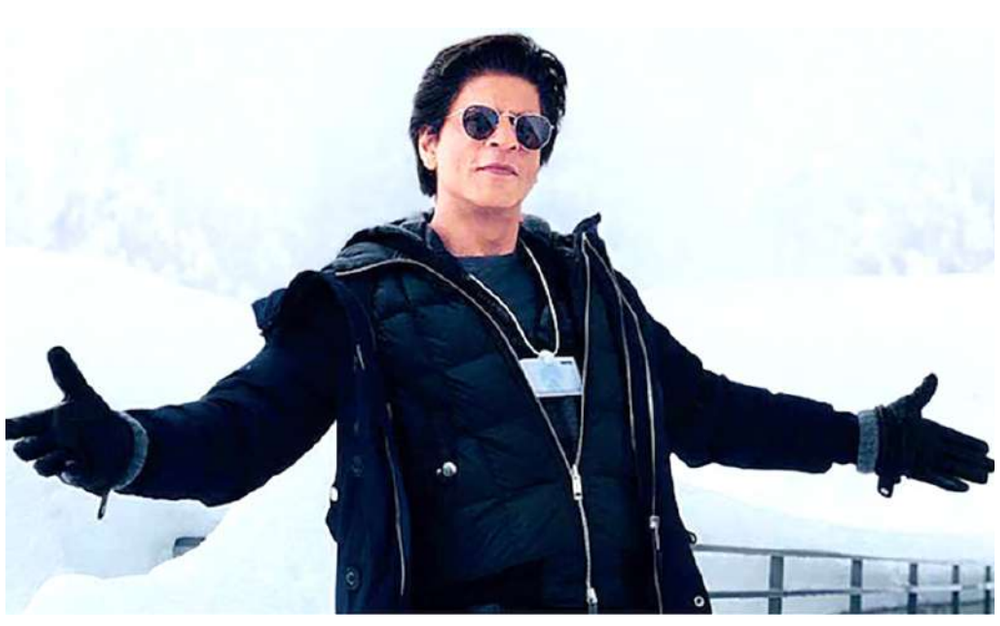
Khufu's solar boat

- Age: 4,500 years.
- One of the oldest, best-preserved vessels from antiquity.

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SRK@60: From Boomers to GenZ, the world still belongs to King Khan



Shah Rukh Khan's journey, rooted in early television shows like 'Fauji' and 'Circus', transitioned to cinema with his 1992 debut in 'Deewana' ***PHOTO: X***

Gen Z remixes him. Millennials grew up with him. Boomers watched him rise. Few global entertainers enjoy the kind of cross-generational, cross-cultural devotion that Shah Rukh Khan commands. As the Hindi film icon turns 60 on 2 November, millions across India and the world are preparing to celebrate not just the actor, but the cultural phenomenon who has shaped their understanding of romance, heroism and aspiration for more than three decades.

This year alone, Khan recorded a string of viral moments that reaffirmed his enduring global relevance. In May, he became the first Indian male actor to walk the Met Gala red carpet. In June, he appeared in a cameo in Ed Sheeran's music video 'Sapphire'. By October, a selfie he took in Riyadh with South Korean 'Squid Game' star Lee Jung-jae had fans declaring it the "collab of the century". His Google Trends footprint stretches from Mauritius to Myanmar, evidence of a stardom that transcends languages, platforms and borders.

For fans, the celebrations are as much about the man as they are about the star. Claudia Calle and Manigret Aparicio, who have travelled from Peru to Mumbai, belong to a new wave of international admirers who discovered Khan through streaming, diaspora communities and global pop culture. Claudia, an artist who runs the SRK Peru fan club, recalls falling in love with Khan's work through the 2004 hit 'Veer Zaara'. "Afterwards, I watched all his past films on DVD, including 'Karan Arjun', 'Baazigar', 'Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa' and 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge'," she says.

Their devotion runs deep: their home in Peru is named 'Mannat', after Khan's iconic Bandra residence. They have also crafted 26–27 handmade figurines of his famous screen characters from films such as 'Ra.One', 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' and 'Jawan' as a special birthday gift.

Khan's journey, rooted in early television shows like 'Fauji' and 'Circus', transitioned to cinema with his 1992 debut in 'Deewana'. He became Bollywood's brooding anti-hero in 'Baazigar' and 'Darr', later earning the title of "King of Romance" with blockbusters such as 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge', 'Dil Toh Pagal Hai' and 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai'. His versatility shone in socially resonant films like 'Swades' and 'Chak De! India'. In 2023, he reaffirmed his box office supremacy with the action spectacles 'Pathaan' and 'Jawan'.

Fan clubs are the backbone of SRK celebrations, and preparations this year have begun well ahead of time. One of the largest groups, SRK Universe, co-founded by Yash Paryani and boasting over 6,13,000 followers on X and 147,000 on Instagram, has turned the week into "SRK Week". Instead of a single-day celebration, they have organised charity events and social initiatives in Khan's name. "We started with charity work for cancer patients, senior citizens and differently abled children. We've done blood donation drives, screened 'Main Hoon Naa' for underprivileged kids, and organised food distribution outside Nair Hospital," Paryani says. For him, Khan is an inspiration "to follow our dreams and be a better person".

In Chennai, fan club leader Sudhir Kothari says his group has planned a "special surprise", including drones, banners and messages outside Mannat. "For us, 60 is just a number. We don't think he is 60. For us he is young," he says. Despite renovation work at Khan's residence forcing the family, Gauri, Aryan, Suhana and Abram, to relocate temporarily, fans remain determined to gather outside the iconic gates. "Without his glimpse at Mannat on his birthday, the celebration will be incomplete," Kothari says. On 1 November, the clubs will hold a pre-birthday bash, followed by a midnight rally to Mannat.

Khan traditionally meets his fans on his birthday, waving from the bungalow's famous balcony. This year, he is expected to host a large party for fans on 2 November, with organisers hinting at "special plans". Many are also hoping that the first look of his upcoming film 'King', directed by Siddharth Anand and starring Suhana Khan, Deepika Padukone, Abhishek Bachchan, Rani Mukerji and Arshad Warsi, will be released on the day.

Beyond India, his influence continues to soar among younger audiences. Gen Z, native to TikTok and global pop mashups, has embraced Khan's signature moves, the outstretched arms, the expressive eyes, the lip-synched love songs, and transformed them into digital folklore. Canadian-Indian rapper Tesher's 2020 track 'Young Shahrukh', sampling 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham', has crossed 20 million views on YouTube and earned Khan's own endorsement as he danced to it at public events. Dua Lipa's mash-up of her hit 'Levitating' with 'Wo Ladki Jo' from Khan's 1999 film 'Baadshah' went viral when she performed it in Mumbai last year — complete with the original choreography — to the delight of fans, including Suhana Khan.

Experts say Khan's global appeal is almost self-sustaining. "With India being the most populous country in the world and a huge market, I don't think Khan even needs to make efforts to extend his stardom," says researcher Laila Wessel. His cameo in Ed Sheeran's 'Sapphire' video, she argues, was "smart" not for Khan, but for Sheeran.

As his fans gather across continents, one thing is clear: Shah Rukh Khan's magnetism has not dimmed with time; it has only evolved with new generations, new platforms and new cultural exchanges. At 60, the superstar remains not just a symbol of Indian cinema, but a global figure whose influence crosses borders as effortlessly as he crosses genres. For millions, he is not merely an actor — he is an emotion that endures, adapts and refuses to fade.

—*Agencies*

PHOTO: PTI

Obama back on the campaign road for Election Day

RICHMOND, 1 NOV

Former US president Barack Obama will headline rallies in Virginia and New Jersey this weekend to bolster Democratic gubernatorial nominees Abigail Spanberger and Mikie Sherrill, as voters prepare to head to the polls on Tuesday. Both states are critical contests that may reflect the national sentiment 10 months into Donald Trump's second presidency. Amidst Republican campaigning, Democrats are keen to maximise Black voter turnout, highlighted by Virginia House Speaker Don Scott's assertion that Obama's appeal crosses racial lines. The Republican nominees, Winsome Earle-Sears and Jack Ciattarelli, are capitalising on Trump's support. *—PTI*

Maldives bans smoking for those born after 2007

MALDIVES, 1 NOV

The Maldives has implemented a groundbreaking nationwide ban on tobacco products for individuals born on or after 1 January, 2007 from today. This makes the Maldives the first nation to enforce a generational tobacco ban. The official Health Ministry notification stated, "Individuals born on or after 1 January 2007 are banned from purchasing, using, or being sold tobacco products in the Maldives." The legislation, introduced during a Cabinet meeting by President Mohamed Muizzu's office, aims to combat health issues linked to unhealthy lifestyle choices. Retailers must verify ages before selling tobacco, with penalties for violations reaching 50,000 rufiyaa ($3,200). The country's policy also bans e-cigarettes and vaping devices, including for tourists. *—Agencies*

Hasina declared a 'fugitive' in sedition case

DHAKA, 1 NOV

The Bangladesh Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has declared former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 260 others fugitives in a sedition case linked to the 'Joy Bangla Brigade,' as reported by the Dhaka Tribune. The notice, signed by CID Special Superintendent Jasim Uddin Khan, followed a magistrate court's order and was published in newspapers including The Daily Star. The investigation revealed alleged conspiratorial activities targeting the government via the brigade's online platform, which supports Hasina. Following a forensic analysis, the CID filed charges against 286 individuals. On Thursday, Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Court-17 deemed Hasina and others absconding, prompting the issuance of the public notice. *—ANI*

Diddy transferred to New Jersey prison

NEW YORK, 1 NOV

Sean "Diddy" Combs has been moved to Fort Dix Federal Correctional Institution in New Jersey to serve the remainder of his four-year sentence for prostitution-related charges. As of Friday, he had spent approximately 14 months of his 50-month sentence and is expected to be released on 8 May, 2028, pending reductions for participation in treatment programmes. Combs' lawyers had requested the transfer to enable him to join the facility's drug treatment programme, arguing it would help him "address drug abuse issues and to maximise family visitation and rehabilitative efforts." While Combs has appealed his conviction, President Donald Trump has stated that the artist has also sought a pardon. *—PTI*

Carney says he apologised to Trump over tariff ad

Canadian PM says he was opposed to the Reagan ad

SEOUL, 1 NOV

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said he had apologised to US President Donald Trump over an anti-tariff political advertisement when the two met in South Korea.

Speaking to reporters on Saturday after attending an Asia-Pacific summit in South Korea, Carney said he had made the apology privately to Trump when they both attended a dinner hosted by South Korea's President on Wednesday.

"I did apologise to the President," Carney said, confirming comments by Trump made on Friday.

While confirming that he reviewed the advertisement, Carney added and had told Ontario Premier Doug Ford not to run the ad which had former US president Ronald Reagan saying tariffs cause economic disasters.

The ad triggered Trump, who, in a lengthy Truth Social post, slammed Canada and hiked tariffs on their goods.

When departing from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit on Friday, Trump had said that he had a "very good" conversation with Carney.

Canadian PM Mark Carney and US President Donald Trump *PHOTO: ANI/PTI*

- Ontario had aired an ad featuring former US president Ronald Reagan criticising tariffs, which triggered Trump into increase taxes on Canada

However, he refused to say that the two countries would restart trade talks, despite Ford pulling the ad shortly after Trump's wrath.

Washington and Ottawa were seen as two of the world's strongest allies until Trump took office and "joked" about making it the 51st American state. The US has been Canada's largest trading partner, with the latter sending around 75 percent of its exports to its southern neighbour. That trade has been upended with Trump's tariffs. *—Agencies*

Shutdown driven staff shortages delaying flights

Continued staffing shortages in air traffic control facilities around the country were again causing delays at airports on Friday as the government shutdown neared the one-month mark. US Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy has been warning that travellers would start to see more flights delayed or cancelled.

Trump rules out strikes on Venezuela

Trump dismissed any US plans to conduct strikes within Venezuela after repeatedly bombing boats of alleged drug traffickers. Trump's denial comes after reports emerged that the US is considering plans to target cocaine facilities and drug trafficking routes in Venezuela.

Engage with Hinduism, group tells Vance

An American Hindu organisation asked VP JD Vance to "engage with Hinduism" after he hoped his wife, Usha, would embrace Christianity. Vance clarified that he doesn't want her to convert. "Why not reciprocate and engage with Hinduism too?" said Hindu American Foundation.

CHRISTIANS FACE AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT IN NIGERIA: DON

PHOTO: X

WASHINGTON, 1 NOV

US President Trump has opened the door for sanctions on Nigeria over its alleged failure in reigning in the persecution of Christians. Trump announced Friday that he would designate Nigeria "a country of particular concern" because "Christianity is facing an existential threat" in the West African Country.

Trump's Truth Social post added that, "Radical Islamists are responsible for this mass slaughter."

The Nigerian government vehemently rejects the claims and analysts say that while Christians are among those targeted, the majority of victims of armed groups are Muslims.

"The US cannot stand by while such atrocities are happening in Nigeria. We stand ready, willing, and able to save our great Christian population around the World!" Trump said. Nigeria was placed as a "country of particular concern" earlier, but not over its alleged targeting of Christians. That tag was lifted in 2023. *—PTI*

US WARY OF CHINA

The US delegation met Pakistan Minister for Finance & Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb and others *PHOTO: X@FINANCEGOVPK*

US, Pak hold talk on mining and minerals

ISLAMABAD, 1 NOV

A US delegation held talks with Pakistani officials to seek cooperation in minerals and mining as Washington races to secure mineral supply chains for American industry amid concerns over China's increasing control on rare-earth resources.

The US delegation, led by Critical Minerals Forum (CMF) chief Robert Louis Strayer II, along with US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker, met Minister for Finance & Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb and his team on Friday.

According to an official statement, the US delegation "discussed avenues of cooperation in the minerals and mining sector, strengthening supply-chain security, and encouraging responsible and sustainable investment in Pakistan's critical minerals landscape".

Dawn reported that the CMF's focus was driven by the strategic threat posed by Beijing's control over key resources. "China's dominance of critical mineral supply chains has become a well-known threat to US national security, economic competitiveness, and long-term strategic objectives," Strayer wrote in his only article on the CMF website.

- Dawn reported that the American delegation's focus was driven by the strategic threat posed by Beijing's control over key resources

The US stakeholders are concerned about China's growing control over global critical minerals.

According to the paper, Strayer told Pakistan that the CMF is working globally to support reliable supply chains for the US industry, particularly in emerging markets. The forum, he said, "focused on rare and niche metals, including copper and antimony, and aims to de-risk investments from both financial and security perspectives". *—PTI*

China to host next year's APEC summit, says Xi

BEIJING/GYEONGJU, 1 NOV

China will host the next year's APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in November 2026, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced on Saturday.

The 2026 summit of leaders of 21 Asian and Pacific Rim nations will be held at Shenzhen, he said while speaking at the concluding session of this year's meeting being held at Gyeongju in South Korea. Next year's summit will be China's third Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' meeting as a host.

Xi said that economies in the Asia-Pacific region should strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation, seize new opportunities and address new challenges. *—PTI*

Israel says 3 bodies returned by Hamas are not of hostages

JERUSALEM, 1 NOV

The remains of three people handed over by Hamas to the Red Cross this week do not belong to any of the hostages, an Israeli military official said Saturday, the latest development that could undermine the US-brokered agreement for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war.

The handover followed Israel's return on Friday of the bodies of 30 Palestinians to Gaza. That completed an exchange after militants earlier this week turned over remains of two hostages.

The unidentified remains of the three people were returned late Friday to Israel, where they were being examined overnight.

Since the US brokered ceasefire took effect on 10 October, militants have released the remains of 17 hostages that were held in Gaza for the past two years.

The truce faced its biggest challenge earlier this week when Israel killed over 100 people in Gaza. *—PTI*

The UN has called the Sudan war the worst humanitarian crisis currently *PHOTO: UN*

60,000 people fled Sudan's El-Fasher after RSF's seizure: UN

CAIRO, 1 NOV

At least 60,000 people have fled the Sudanese city of el-Fasher, which was captured by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) over the weekend, the UN refugee agency.

The UN has received reports of "horrendous accounts of summary executions, mass killings, rapes, attacks against humanitarian workers, looting, abductions and forced displacement," said Seif Magango, spokesperson for the UN human rights office.

Reports suggest that at least 2,000 civilians were killed by the RSF who took control of the city after an 18-month siege.

More than 36,000 people have fled since Saturday, mostly on foot, to Tawila - a town west of El Fasher that is already sheltering more than 652,000 displaced people, according to the International Organisation for Migratio

Dozens of women were gangraped when the paramilitary RSF took over the city: UN

Sudan has become the site of the world's largest humanitarian and displacement crisis on record, the UN said, with about 14 million people displaced out of a population of 51 million.

Famine is widespread, and outbreaks of cholera and deadly diseases are increasing, it added.

The UN also decried the world's apathy towards the war, saying that the' lack of response would only worsen the crisis. *—Agencies*

China's Shenzhou 21 docks with Space Station, fastest ever

JIUQUAN, 1 NOV

China's Shenzhou 21 spaceship successfully docked with the Tiangong space station, completing the process in just 3.5 hours—a record time, as announced by the China Manned Space Agency. The launch took place at 11.44pm local time on Friday from the Jiuquan launch centre. The crew, consisting of mission commander Zhang Lu, and first-time astronauts Wu Fei and Zhang Hongzhang, will spend around six months at the station.

The mission promises to turn the station into a "utopia" with tai-chi, gardening, and poetry.

Notably, four mice will be sent to study their behavioural changes in weightlessness, a milestone in space biology. Zhang Jingbo, spokesperson for the agency, confirmed ambitions remain strong with plans to land a human on the moon by 2030. China's space programme is entirely domestically developed and controlled by the

People's Liberation Army, marking significant advancements in recent years. *—PTI*

FOR KIDS UNDER 3

FDA restricts use of fluoride for kids

WASHINGTON, 1 NOV

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has moved to limit the use of fluoride supplements used to strengthen children's teeth, the latest action by Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr and his deputies against a chemical that is a mainstay of dental care.

The FDA on Friday said the products are no longer recommended for children younger than 3 and those who are older but don't face serious risks of tooth decay. Previously, the products have been prescribed for children as young as six months.

The action stopped short of FDA statements in May suggesting regulators would seek the removal of the products from the market. Instead, the agency sent letters to four companies warning them not to market their products outside the new limits.

Fluoride is used in most toothpastes to prevent cavities *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

Fluoride tablets and lozenges are sometimes recommended for children and teens at increased risk of tooth decay or cavities because of low fluoride in their local drinking water. Companies also sell drops for babies.

The FDA released an analysis, concluding that fluoride supplements have limited benefits for children's teeth and may be linked to emerging safety concerns, including gut issues, weight gain and cognition. "For the same reason fluoride may work to kill bacteria on teeth, it may also alter the gut microbiome, which may have broader health implications."

The American Dental Association said there are no significant health problems associated with fluoride. Dentists have warned that restricting it may cause more dental problems. *—PTI*

People took to the streets of Tanzania to protest the polling *PHOTO: PTI*

Tanzania Prez Hassan wins election as 700 feared dead

DODOMA, 1 NOV

Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan won the country's disputed election with more than 97 per cent of the vote, according to official results announced early Saturday, a poll that had protesters taking to the streets in protest. Opposition groups say that at least 700 people were killed in three days of demonstration that saw military deployment, although there has been no official confirmation from Tanzanian officials.

The result is likely to amplify the concerns of critics, opposition groups and others who said the 29 Oct election in Tanzania was not a contest but a coronation after Hassan's two main rivals were barred or prevented from running. She faced 16 candidates from smaller parties. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

₹2,000 notes worth ₹5,817 cr in circulation: RBI

MUMBAI, 1 NOV

The high-value Rs 2,000 notes worth Rs 5,817 crore are still in circulation, according to the Reserve Bank data released on Saturday. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced the withdrawal of Rs 2,000 denomination banknotes from circulation on 19 May, 2023. Rs 2,000 banknotes continue to be legal tender. In a statement, the central bank said the total value of Rs 2,000 banknotes in circulation, which was Rs 3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on 19 May, 2023, when the withdrawal of the currency was announced, has declined to Rs 5,817 crore at the close of business on 31 October, 2025. The RBI periodically publishes the status of withdrawal of Rs 2,000 banknotes. *—PTI*

India's power consumption dips by 6% in October

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Power consumption in the country fell by 6 per cent to 132 billion units in October from 140.47 BUs in same month last year, mainly on account of less use of cooling appliances. The October month also saw rains in various parts of the country. The decline in power consumption was attributed to unseasonal rainfall during the month in some parts of the country coupled with onset of winter season, which kept temperatures in check, experts said. The peak power demand met during October was at 210.71 GW, lower from 219.22 GW recorded in October 2024. The peak power demand had touched an all-time high of about 250 GW in May 2024. *—PTI*

Coal India output falls by 9.8% in October

KOLKATA, 1 NOV

Coal India Ltd has reported a 9.8 per cent year-on-year decline in production to 56.4 million tonnes in October, marking a continued slump in operational performance, amid subdued demand and post-monsoon challenges. Coal offtake during the month also fell 5.9 per cent to 58.3 MT, according to provisional data released by the company on Saturday. During April-October 2025, the coal major's cumulative production stood at 385.3 MT, down 4.5 per cent from the year-ago period, while total offtake fell 2.4 per cent to 415.3 MT. Meanwhile, Coal India has appointed Sanoj Kumar Jha as interim Chairman-cum-Managing Director with effect from 1 November, following the superannuation of PM Prasad. The date also marks the company's foundation day. *—PTI*

Mahindra Lifespace posts Q2 profit of Rs 47.91 cr

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Real estate developer Mahindra Lifespace Developers Ltd posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 47.91 crore for the July-September quarter of the 2025-26 fiscal, compared with a net loss of Rs 14.01 crore in the same period last year. According to a regulatory filing on Friday, the company's total income more than doubled to Rs 33.06 crore from Rs 15.96 crore a year earlier. Mahindra Lifespace's development footprint spans 53.30 million sqft of completed, ongoing and upcoming residential projects across seven cities, alongside over 5,000 acres under development and management at integrated and industrial clusters in four locations. The firm is the real estate arm of the Mahindra Group. *—PTI*

GST collections grows 4.6% to ₹1.96L cr despite tax cuts

This is lower than average growth in GST mop-up this fiscal

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Festive buying spree unleashed by lower tax rates pushed gross GST collection to about Rs 1.96 lakh crore in October, registering a 4.6 per cent year-on-year growth -- the slowest rate so far this fiscal.

The slowest pace of revenue growth in October comes after Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates on 375 items, from kitchen staples to electronics and automobiles, were slashed with effect from September 22 -- the first day of Navratri.

According to the government data released on Saturday, gross GST mop-up in October was about Rs 1.96 lakh crore, a 4.6 per cent higher over Rs 1.87 lakh crore collections in October 2024.

The gross domestic revenue, an indication of local sales, grew 2 per cent to Rs 1.45 lakh crore, while tax from imports surged about 13 per cent to Rs 50,884 crore in October.

The October GST collection number reflects the impact of festive season sales and the pent up demand *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

The rate of growth in gross GST collections in year-on-year terms in October at 4.6 per cent is, however, lower than about 9 per cent average growth in GST mop-up so far this fiscal.

In August and September this year, GST collection grew at 6.5 per cent to Rs 1.86 lakh crore and at 9.1 per cent to Rs 1.89 lakh crore, respectively.

The October GST collection number reflects the impact of festive season sales and the pent up demand.

Consumers had held back their purchase decision, awaiting GST rate cut after Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech had announced that GST rates will be cut ahead of Diwali.

The rate cut was, however, implemented with the onset of Navratri.

As per the data, GST refunds jumped 39.6 per cent year-on-year in October to Rs 26,934 crore.

Net GST revenue, after adjusting refunds, stood at Rs 1.69 lakh crore in October 2025, recording 0.2 per cent YoY growth. *—PTI*

RS 5 PER LPG CYLINDER

ATF prices up by 1%, LPG rates fall

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices have been increased by about 1 per cent, while commercial LPG rates have been reduced marginally by Rs 5 per cylinder in the latest monthly revision, reflecting movements in global energy benchmarks.

In Delhi, ATF now costs Rs 94,543.02 per kltr, up Rs 777 or 0.8 per cent, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This marks the second consecutive monthly rise, following a 3.3 per cent hike on 1 October. Prices were last cut by 1.4 per cent in September.

The increase is expected to raise operating costs for airlines, as fuel typically accounts for nearly 40 per cent of total expenses.

In Mumbai, ATF prices rose to Rs 88,444.87 per kl; in Chennai to Rs 98,089.68; and in Kolkata to Rs 97,549.18 per kl. Rates vary across states due to local taxes such as VAT.

Meanwhile, commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants has been reduced to Rs 1,590.50 per 19-kg cylinder in Delhi. The reduction follows a Rs 15.50 rise last month and comes after six earlier cuts totaling Rs 223 per cylinder since April.

Domestic LPG prices remain unchanged at Rs 853 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

State-run Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd, and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd revise ATF and LPG prices on the first day of each month based on international benchmarks and exchange rates. *—PTI*

Pine Labs to launch IPO, aims to raise Rs 2,080 crore

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Fintech firm Pine Labs is preparing to launch its initial public offering (IPO) on 7 November, targeting Rs 2,080 crore through a fresh issue of shares. The IPO will close on 11 November, with bidding for anchor investors set to open for one day on 6 November, according to the red herring prospectus.

In addition to the fresh issue, there will be an Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to 8.23 crore equity shares. Notable participants in the OFS include Peak XV Partners, Actis, PayPal, Mastercard Asia/Pacific, Temasek via Macritchie Investments, Invesco, Madison India Capital, and Pine Labs co-founder Lokvir Kapoor.

Proceeds from the fresh issue are earmarked for debt repayment, investments in IT assets, cloud infrastructure, technology development, and the procurement of digital checkout points. The company also plans to invest in its subsidiaries, such as Qwikcilver in Singapore and Pine Payment Solutions in Malaysia.

Pine Labs, based in Noida, focuses on digitising commerce through digital payments and solutions for merchants and financial institutions. It processed payments worth Rs 11.42 lakh crore across 5.68 billion transactions in FY25, serving over 9.88 lakh merchants and various sectors, including retail, healthcare, and public services.

Axis Capital, Morgan Stanley India Company, Citigroup Global Markets India, JP Morgan India, and Jefferies India are the book running lead managers for the IPO, while KFin Technologies is the registrar. *—PTI*

Shadowfax plans Rs 2,000 cr IPO

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Shadowfax Technologies, a logistics service provider, has submitted updated documentation to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) with the aim of raising Rs 2,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO includes a fresh issue of shares valued at Rs 1,000 crore and offers for sale (OFS) amounting to Rs 1,000 crore from existing investors.

Key players in the OFS include Flipkart Internet, Eight Roads Investments Mauritius II Ltd, NewQuest Asia Fund IV, Nokia Growth Partners IV, and Snapdeal founders Kunal Bahl and Rohit Kumar Bansal.

Proceeds from the fresh issue are earmarked for enhancing network infrastructure, lease payments for new centres, marketing initiatives, and potential acquisitions. *—PTI*

Small biz to get GST registration in 3 days

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Small and low-risk businesses will get GST registration within 3 working days as the GST department rolls out a simplified GST registration scheme for small and medium businesses from Saturday.

Small and low-risk businesses applicants whom the Goods and Services Tax (GST) system identifies based on data analysis, or those applicants who self-assess that their output tax liability will not exceed Rs 2.5 lakh per month (inclusive of CGST, SGST/UTGST and IGST) will be able to opt for the scheme.

The GST Council, comprising Centre and state finance ministers had in its 3 September, meeting approved the simplified registration scheme.

The scheme will provide for voluntary opting into and withdrawal from the scheme.

Speaking at the CGST building inauguration at Ghaziabad, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that the simplified GST registration scheme from 1 November, is expected to benefit 96 per cent of new applicants.

"Task of the field formation is to operationalise it and ensure that there are no friction in the process," Sitharaman had said.

Over 1.54 crore businesses are currently registered under GST. *—PTI*

GTRI urges India to halt sanctioned oil imports

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

India should suspend oil imports from sanctioned Russian companies, demand the withdrawal of punitive tariffs, and resume trade negotiations with the United States only on equitable terms, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) has said.

In a detailed note, GTRI proposed a three-step strategy to safeguard India's trade interests amid ongoing talks on a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA). The think tank advised that India first end imports from Rosneft and Lukoil two firms recently sanctioned by Washington which together account for 57 per cent of Russia's crude output. It warned that continuing such imports could expose India to secondary sanctions that might cripple financial and digital systems. *—ANI*

Tata beats M&M, Hyundai in Oct sales

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV

Tata Motors retained its position as India's second-largest passenger vehicle manufacturer in October 2025, outperforming Mahindra & Mahindra and Hyundai Motor India in retail sales for the second consecutive month. The surge was attributed to the festive demand and anticipated benefits from recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate reforms.

In October, Tata Motors sold 74,705 units, while Mahindra and Hyundai recorded 66,800 and 65,045 units, respectively. Market leader Maruti Suzuki led with 238,534 units. Tata's impressive performance included over 100,000 vehicle deliveries during the festive month, with notable sales of the Nexon and Punch models.

PHOTO: TATA

According to Gaurav Vangaal from S&P Global Mobility, the festive season coupled with GST changes spurred demand despite some logistical constraints. Meanwhile, Mahindra reported a 26 per cent growth in overall sales, reaching 120,142 units, with passenger vehicle sales rising 31 per cent to 71,624 units. Hyundai's sales reached 69,894 units, demonstrating robust SUV demand.

- According to Gaurav Vangaal from S&P Global Mobility, the festive season coupled with GST changes spurred demand despite some logistical constraints.

Additionally, Kia India reported a record monthly sales increase of 30 per cent, reaching 29,556 units, while Skoda Auto recorded its highest ever sales of 8,252 units. TVS Motor Co also saw an 11 per cent rise in sales, reflecting strong automotive market in this festive season. *—PTI*

PFIZER SUES TO BLOCK NOVO NORDISK'S METSERA ACQUISITION BID

WASHINGTON, 1 NOV

Pfizer has initiated legal action against Metsera and Denmark's Novo Nordisk to halt a competitive bid for Metsera valued at nearly $5 billion. Pfizer's lawsuit, filed after market hours on Friday, follows Novo's announcement of a potential $9 billion acquisition of Metsera, which Pfizer claims poses significant regulatory risks.

Metsera, which lacks marketable products but is developing treatments for obesity and diabetes, is viewed as a strategic asset by both companies. Novo currently markets well-known treatments such as Wegovy and Ozempic, hence its interest in Metsera's pipeline.

Pfizer asserts that Novo's offer cannot be deemed superior, citing substantial regulatory hurdles that may impede its completion. The company claims Novo's actions represent "an illegal attempt by a company with a dominant market position to suppress competition." Representatives from Novo and Metsera have yet to comment. The outcome of this legal dispute could have significant implications for the burgeoning field of metabolic disease treatments.—*PTI*

FRAUDSTERS ON THE PROWL

Amid the rising number of online frauds, victims of bank fraud have been increasing. India in the fiscal year 2024-25 has witnessed bank fraud worth more than Rs 36,000 crore. Here are 5 different types of fraud and ways to protect yourself from being the next victim:

TYPES OF FRAUDS

1. APK FRAUD

Frauds which are committed by sending fake links through messaging apps.

Do: Download apps from verified links or sites.

Don't: Click on links or files sent by unknown numbers/people.

2.INVESTMENT FRAUD

People will promise very high returns/profits from trading or investing.

Do: Make investments or trades via SEBI-approved platforms.

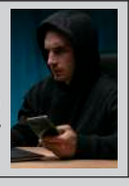
Don't: Take up offers that are "too good to be true" & always verify the platforms.

CREDIT : HDFC BANK

3.DIGITAL ARREST FRAUD

Threatens you by impersonating a government official & asks for ransom.

Do: Stay calm and hang up immediately instead of



Don't: Share personal information or transfer money.

4.JOB OFFER FRAUD

Offers fake job opportunities and asks for banking details or a job application fee.

Do: Contact the company and verify its authenticity before applying.

Don't: Pay an application fee for a job or share bank account information.

5.PARCEL DELIVERY FRAUDS

Fraudsters will claim your parcel containing an illegal item and will demand payment.

Do: Contact the courier company directly. Re-check the order you made.

Don't: Make payments without confirming with the courier company.

PRECAUTION IS THE KEY

In case you face a financial fraud, use the LWB Rule:

- L: Law enforcement
- B: Bank
- W: Wipe or reset your device and update all passwords.
- Use official websites or Mobile banking apps for banking requirements.
- Official services contacts will have a prefix number starting with '1600'.
- Review app permissions regularly.
- To report financial frauds contact the national helpline number: 1930 or **https://cybercrime.gov.in/**
- Report suspicious messages on Chakshu Portal at **https://sancharsaathi.gov.in.**

PHOTO: PTI

Iyer discharged from hospital, stable now: BCCI

SYDNEY, 1 NOV

India ODI vice-captain Shreyas Iyer has been discharged from a Sydney hospital after undergoing a minor procedure following a spleen and rib cage injury while successfully attempting a catch in the third ODI against Australia. "He (Iyer) is now stable and recovering well. The BCCI Medical Team, along with specialists in Sydney and India, is pleased with his recovery, and he has been discharged from the hospital today," BCCI said in a statement on Saturday. The 30-year-old had sustained a lower left rib cage injury while attempting a difficult running catch to dismiss Alex Carey off Harshit Rana's bowling in the third ODI. Iyer is expected to return to India when he is fit to fly, but will be out of action for at least the next two months.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Babar becomes highest run-getter in T20Is

KARACHI, 1 NOV

Babar Azam has added another golden chapter to Pakistan cricket by becoming the highest run-scorer in T20 internationals. The former captain achieved this milestone during the second T20I against South Africa at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore, where he contributed a steady 11 off 18 balls to guide Pakistan to victory, News. Az reports, citing foreign media. With this achievement, Babar now leads the world with 4,232 runs in 123 innings, surpassing India's Rohit Sharma (4,231 in 151 innings) and Virat Kohli (4,188 in 117 innings). Star batter Saim Ayub returned to form with a belligerent unbeaten 71 off 38 deliveries as Pakistan raced to 112/1 in less than 14 overs after bowling out South Africa for a paltry 110.—*PTI*

Former Ranji Trophy player from Tripura dies

AGARTALA, 1 NOV

Former Tripura all-rounder Rajesh Banik, who represented India in the Under-19 World Cup, died in a road accident at Anandanagar in west Tripura, an official said on Saturday. He was 40 and is survived by his father, mother, and brother. Banik, who made his Ranji Trophy debut for Tripura in the 2002-03 season, was among the state's leading cricketers of his time and later served as a selector for the Under-16 state team. His untimely death on Friday has shocked the cricket fraternity in the state. The Tripura Cricket Association (TCA) paid rich tribute to the former cricketer at its headquarters on Saturday.—*PTI*

Munich to host UEFA Champions League final in 2028

LONDON, 1 NOV

Bayern Munich's stadium is set to host another Champions League final in 2028, and staging the 2029 final is a contest between Wembley Stadium in London and Barcelona's renovated Camp Nou. UEFA confirmed Friday the list of interested bidders from among its member associations, suggesting a long-speculated final in New York will not happen until at least 2030. "The declarations of interest are not binding, and the final proposals must be delivered with the bid dossiers by June 10," UEFA said in a statement. Munich was the only bid for the 2028 final.—*PTI*

India eye historic World Cup glory

Skipper Wolvaardt says pressure on India could work in South Africa's favor

NAVI MUMBAI, 1 NOV

Indian women's cricket stands on the brink of a watershed moment, reminiscent of the men's historic 1983 triumph, with the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side determined to end its ICC trophy drought when it faces a formidable South Africa in the Women's World Cup final here Sunday.

The 13th edition of the World Cup is guaranteed to crown a new champion between third-time finalists India and first-time finalists South Africa, both riding on the back of remarkable campaigns.

A title triumph could trigger an unprecedented surge of interest in women's cricket in India, inspiring a new generation of young girls to take up the sport — perhaps even more than the advent of the Women's Premier League did three seasons ago.

But the hosts will need to quickly move past their emotionally draining semifinal win here three nights ago — one that might have already earned them the "favorites" tag. Jemimah Rodrigues' unforgettable 127 not out and Harmanpreet's gritty 89, coupled with an uncharacteristically erratic outing from seven-time champions Australia, carried India into yet another summit clash, a stage where heartbreak has struck far too often.

India's nine-run loss to England in the 2017 ODI World Cup final still lingers painfully for those who were part of that campaign, including Harmanpreet. It was followed by a narrow five-run defeat to Australia in the 2023 T20 World Cup semifinal and another gut-wrenching loss to the same opponents in the 2022 Commonwealth Games gold medal match.

India vs South Africa
Match starts at
3.00 pm IST

> In front of a roaring Indian crowd at the D.Y. Patil Stadium, banking on calm over chaos as her team stands one win away from rewriting their cricketing history
> -Laura Wolvaardt, South Africa skipper

For India, the battle is no longer about proving skill or form, but about crossing the elusive final hurdle that has so often tripped them, including in this very tournament.

Harmanpreet before WC final: looking forward to experiencing winning

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Saturday said her team has endured the pain of losing on several occasions in the past but is now ready to experience the joy of winning a global title, ahead of their Women's World Cup final against South Africa here.

India and South Africa will face off in the summit clash here at the DY Patil Stadium tomorrow, with the women's World Cup set to have a new champion alongside former winners Australia, England, and New Zealand.

"We know how it feels to lose. But we are looking forward to how it feels to win. Hopefully, tomorrow is a special day for us.

We have done a lot of hard work, and it's only about getting everything done. Tomorrow for the team," Harmanpreet told reporters on the eve of the final. —*PTI*

3RD T20I

INDIA VS AUSTRALIA

INDIA vs AUSTRALIA
Match starts at
1.45 pm IST

HEAD TO HEAD AT HOBART	
PLAYED:	34
INDIA Won:	20
AUS Won:	12
No Result	2

With no Hazlewood around, Indian batters can breathe easy

Josh Hazlewood PHOTO: PTI

HOBART, 1 NOV

The Indian batters will breathe a little easier in the absence of Josh Hazlewood as they look to put up an improved performance, but the baffling omission of left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh continues to raise eyebrows ahead of the third T20 International against Australia on Sunday.

Hazlewood's pinpoint accuracy when it comes to hitting the right length, coupled with the disconcerting bounce that he always generates around the corridor of uncertainty, did become a bit of a nightmare for the Indian batters.

With the Ashes Test starting at the end of this month, Hazlewood has been given a break to rejuvenate before the grueling five-Test series. He won't be part of the remainder of the series. "It would obviously be a relief. I have never faced such bowling," star opener Abhishek Sharma had said after the Melbourne game, as he seemed to be in awe of the Aussie speedster.

And his absence would also mean that Indian batters, who have serious technical flaws in dealing with bounce and seam movement, will feel a bit more assured while facing the likes of Xavier Bartlett, Nathan Ellis, or Sean Abbott.

Both skipper Suryakumar Yadav and skipper-in-waiting Shubman Gill have had problems negotiating deliveries with extra bounce and a good degree of seam movement. Surya and Gill would like to revisit their opening game's playbook when they looked ominous in touch at Canberra.

The Bellerive Oval at Hobart is one ground where the side boundaries are smaller in size, and hence the length would be paramount, considering anything short would be flying over cover, point, square leg, or mid-wicket on either side of the fence.

Bellerive Oval is the ground where the phenomenon of Virat Kohli as a champion ODI batter took shape back in 2012, when he played a masterful knock of 133 not out in 86 balls against Sri Lanka in a chase of 321. Bellerive Oval track has traditionally been a belter for white ball games.

This is also the BBL home ground for pacer Ellis, who happens to captain the local franchise, Hobart Hurricanes. —*PTI*

World Cup Chess: Sadhwani held for a draw by Barrish

PANJIM, 1 NOV

Grandmasters Raunak Sadhwani and S L Narayanan, India's two best hopes, were held to draws by Daniel Barrish of South Africa and Steven Salas Rojas of Peru in the first game of the opening round of the World Cup Chess here on Saturday.

While most of the games in the 156-player contest selected for the first round went according to rankings, there were a few surprises that are typical of the knockout format of the World Cup.

Four players, in fact, did not turn up to play, and their opponents got walkovers. However, those who ended up getting a free point were all higher-ranked players, and this would give them a free passage into the next round of this USD 2 million prize money tournament, which, in addition, has three places reserved for the next candidates' tournament. —*PTI*

TWO-TIME GRAND SLAM WINNER

Rohan Bopanna announces retirement after 20 years

MUMBAI, 1 NOV

Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna, who won two Grand Slam titles in his career, officially announced his retirement from professional tennis on Saturday, 1 November, 2025.

The decision brings to a close a remarkable 20-year journey on the ATP Tour, culminating just months after he became the oldest World No. 1 in men's doubles history at the age of 43 in early 2024. Bopanna took to social media to announce his decision. "How do you bid farewell to something that gave your life its meaning? After 20 unforgettable years on tour, it's time I'm officially hanging up my racquet. From chopping wood in Coorg to strengthen my serve, to standing under the lights of the biggest arenas in the world - it feels surreal. Representing India has been the greatest honor of my life," Bopanna wrote.

"I may be stepping away from competition, but my story with tennis isn't over. This isn't goodbye... It's a thank you to everyone who shaped me, guided me, supported me, and loved me. You're all a part of this story. You're all a part of me," he added on X (formerly known as Twitter).

Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna PHOTO: PTI

Bopanna's final appearance came at the Paris Masters 1000, where he partnered with Alexander Bublik.

Future Plans

While stepping away from competitive play, Bopanna stated that his "story with tennis isn't over". He plans to give back to the sport through the Rohan Bopanna Tennis Development Foundation and other grassroots initiatives to help young Indian players chase their dreams. He is also scheduled to be seen in action during the Tennis Premier League (TPL) season 7 in December 2025. —*PTI*

New Zealand 3-0 ODI series sweep over England

WELLINGTON, 1 NOV

New Zealand scrambled to a tense two-wicket victory in Wellington to seal a 3-0 sweep of the ODIs after England's top-order was filleted once again. Jamie Overton slammed 68 off 62 from No. 8 to help England make a game of it, but the armchair Ashes critics were given plenty more ammunition by another misfiring display before they hop across the Tasman.

It had appeared New Zealand would get the job done routinely, as Daryl Mitchell anchored their chase of 223. But from 188 for 5, they slid to 196 for 8, with Mitchell the eighth man out for 44, edging Sam Curran behind. With more than 10 overs still to be bowled, however, there was time enough for Blair Tickner and Zak Foulkes to tick off the runs required in an unbroken ninth-wicket stand. Tickner had earlier claimed his second consecutive four-wicket haul after new-ball pair Jacob Duffy and Foulkes had knocked over the England top five inside 10.1 overs.

New Zealand 226 for 8 (Ravindra 46, Overton 2-22) beat England 222 (Overton 68, Tickner 4-64, Duffy 3-56) by two wickets —*PTI*

MESSI SET TO VISIT HYDERABAD DURING GOAT TOUR IN INDIA

KOLKATA, 1 NOV

Lionel Messi's much-anticipated 'GOAT Tour to India 2025' just got bigger with Hyderabad added as the new southern leg stop to ensure fans in the region are not "deprived" of seeing their idol following the cancellation of Argentina's proposed friendly in Kerala.

The decision to add Hyderabad comes in the wake of the cancellation of Argentina's proposed friendly in Kochi, which had been originally announced by Kerala Sports Minister V Abdurahiman for 17 November.

12-13 Dec (Kolkata): Arrival at midnight or early hours; Meet and greet at Hotel (9.30–10.40 am); GOAT Cup at Salt Lake Stadium (11.30 am–1.10 pm); Statue unveiling at Sreebhumi, Lake Lake Town; leaves for Hyderabad (2.15 pm).

13 Dec (Hyderabad): Meet and greet (5 pm); GOAT Cup (7–8.45 pm) at either Rajiv Gandhi or Gachibowli Stadiums.

14 Dec (Mumbai): Meet and greet at Hotel (12 noon); Padel GOAT Cup inauguration; GOAT Cup at Wankhede Stadium (5.30 pm). —*PTI*

GROUP B RANJI TROPHY MATCH

Nair hits 2nd ton to take K'taka to 319/3

T'PURAM, 1 NOV

Out-of-favor India batter Karun Nair staked his claim with an unbeaten 142 to guide Karnataka to 319 for three against Kerala on the opening day of a Group B Ranji Trophy match here on Saturday.

Opting to bat, Karnataka lost openers Aneesh KV (8) and skipper Mayank Agarwal (5) early before Nair and wicketkeeper Krishnan Shrijith (65 off 110) shared 16 runs for the third wicket to stabilize the innings.

Smaran Ravichandran (88 batting off 143 balls) was giving Nair company at the crease at stumps..

Out-of-favor India batter Karun Nair PHOTO: PTI

Nair decorated his knock with 14 boundaries and two hits over the fence, while Shrijith smashed 10 fours.

MD Nideesh (1/41), Nedumankuzhy Basil (1/58), and Baba Aparajith (1/65) were the wicket-takers for Kerala..

In another Group B match in New Chandigarh, Punjab rode on skipper Uday Saharan's 100 off 247 balls to reach 215 for five against Goa.

Besides Saharan, wicket-keeper Salil Arora was unbeaten on 51 off 131 deliveries..

Right-arm medium-pacer Deepraj Gaonkar (2/22) picked up two wickets for Goa, while Mohit Redkar (1/41), Vasuki Koushik (1/28), and Arjun Tendulkar (1/58) scalped a wicket each..

In Indore, Madhya Pradesh were 64 for one against Chandigarh at stumps after the rest of the proceedings of the day were called off because of inclement weather.

The other Group B match between Maharashtra and Saurashtra has been washed out due to a wet outfield. —*PTI*

Pant's gritty 50 keeps India A together in chase of 275

BENGALURU, 1 NOV

Skipper Rishabh Pant's unbeaten fifty, laced with impudence, patience, and fortitude, held India A together, taking them to 119 for four against South Africa A on the penultimate day of the four-day match here on Saturday.

India still needs 166 runs to scale down the target of 275, after South Africa, overnight 30 for no loss, were bundled out for 199 in their second innings.

Pant (64 batting, 81 balls, 8x4, 2x6) and Ayush Badoni (0) were at the crease at stumps, and the former will have to play a vital role in getting India A closer to home on Sunday.

The wicketkeeper-batter

joined Rajat Patidar (28) in the middle when the South Africans were bowling like wind, troubling the batters with pace and bounce.At one stage, India were 32 for three, having lost Ayush Mhatre, Sai Sudharsan, and Devdutt Padikkal.

Mhatre chopped Tshepo Moreki onto his stumps, Sudharsan's 38-ball struggle ended when he fell leg before to the same bowler. —*PTI*